GET YOUR STRONG SHOULDERS POSTER INSIDE

YOUR WELLNESS ISSUE

oxygen

ROBERT KENNEDY'S
AUSTRALIAN WOMEN'S FITNESS

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with Editor Lindy Olsen

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P124

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Issue 74

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on the cover

This issue we feature on the cover: Erin Stern
Photo by Robert Reiff
Hair and make-up by Nancy Jambazian
Fitness clothing by Elisabetta Rogiani
Cover design by Leo Costa Leite

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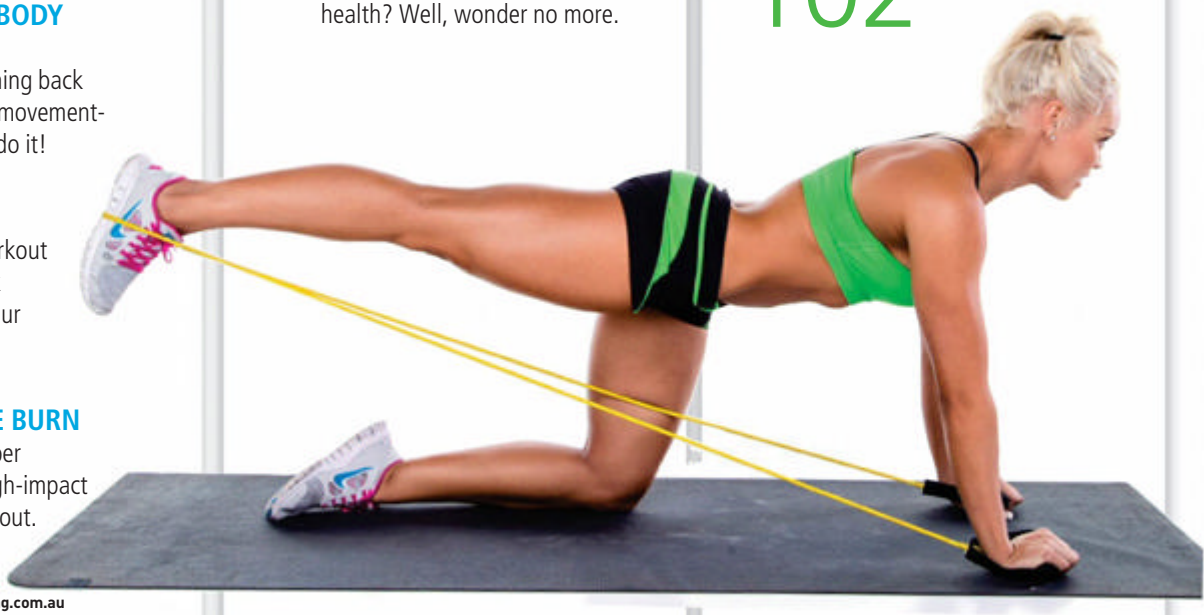

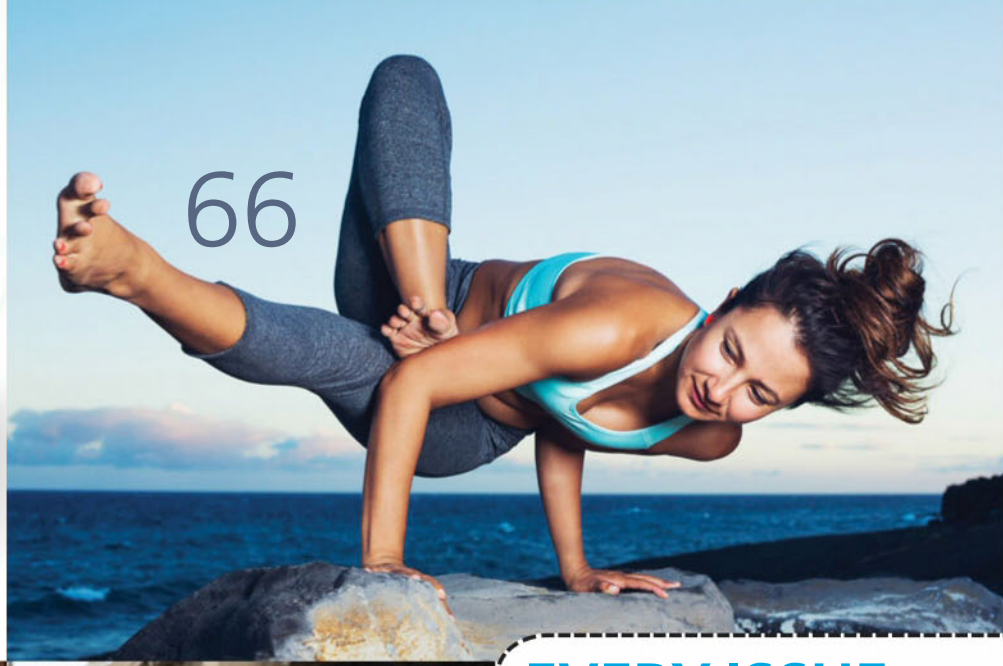

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You could be next!

The Art of Gratitude

Say nine people gave you one compliment each: "Your arms look amazing," "Your legs are so toned!" "I want your abs!"… and one person said something negative to you: "Look at the cellulite on your butt…" which would stick in your mind the most? I'm willing to bet you'd focus on that one comment about your butt and ignore the rest. Silly, isn't it, that we focus on the single negative and let it deflate our self-esteem and happiness.

We don't just do it with our bodies, though. We often do it with other aspects of our lives as well. We focus on our small house, our not-so-new car or that time our partner forgot our anniversary. We become so focused on what we want to change that we forget what we already have. Not completely; you know you have a house, a car and a loving partner, but you forget the most important part of having all of those things: being grateful for them and actually ENJOYING them.

We sometimes put our blinkers on and become so focused on all of the disappointments in our life that all of the AWESOME moments that have the potential to fill us with overwhelming joy seem to float on by without us evening noticing. And you know what that does? It makes life feel far less enjoyable than it really is. So if your life seems crap right now – it's not – the way you're looking at it is.

Think for a minute: does the way you look influence how you live your life? Do you beat yourself up or feel down about not looking a certain way? What if today was your last day on earth but you were given the opportunity to come back tomorrow in another body, would you do it? Most of you would say yes in a heartbeat. And you know what? You'd also LOVE and APPRECIATE that body no matter how big, small, curvy or disproportioned it is, because you get to wake up tomorrow. You'll get to feel the warmth of sunshine on your face, hear the calming sound of rain on the roof and smell the crisp morning air at the break of dawn again. You'll get to hug your loved ones, enjoy your favourite dessert, and hear the sound of your children's voices again. Life is pretty damn AMAZING, and if you can't see it, you're not looking hard enough.

PHOTO CREDIT DALLAS OLSEN

MY CHALLENGE TO YOU IS TO TAKE THOSE BLINKERS OFF. Begin to form a habit of looking for all of those amazing things in your life for you to be grateful for. With more gratitude comes a greater sense of wellbeing. After all, that's what this issue is about: increasing your wellbeing, both physically AND mentally.

Start now by writing down three things you're grateful for. Try keeping a diary by your bed and getting into the habit of doing it every night.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Then, check out our articles to help you reduce your stress with nutrition *(pg.46)*, jump out of bed each morning *(pg.54)*, take back the power in your life *(pg.66)*, play, explore and connect with the world *(pg.78)*, and much, much more so 2015 is a year filled to the brim with gratitude.

Believe in Yourself, Train Hard, Keep Fit and LOVE Life!

Lindy xx

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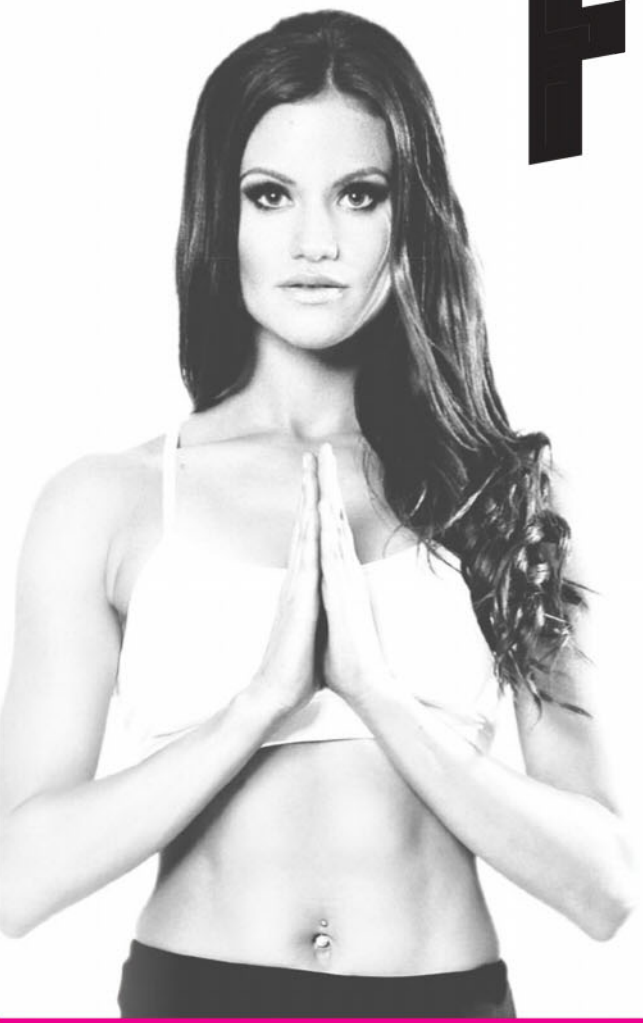

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PHOTO BY PAUL BUCETA

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Amanda Steer is a fulltime police officer, RPM instructor, Musashi Nutrition-sponsored athlete and *Oxygen* cover girl. Amanda has won ANB National and Asia Pacific titles.

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FITNESS & TRAINING

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MIND/BODY NATUROPATHY

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Geoff Edwards, Life Coach, NLP cert.

Internationally accredited life coach with over 25 years of coaching experience based in Melbourne, Australia. Has impacted over 20,000 individuals and clients worldwide through his coaching work and publications!

PHOTO CREDIT: AMANDA, PENNY, JUSTINE, SKYE, CLAUDETTE, LINDY, GREG, JONATHAN BY DALLAS OLEN | LESLEY PHOTO BY ANDREW K | ALL OTHERS SUPPLIED BY RESPECTIVE CONTRIBUTORS

Photo by Dallas Olsen

Belinda Potter

Belinda Potter is one of Australia's leading athletes in the fitness industry, particularly in the area of figure competitions. She began training in her mid-teens but it wasn't until her early 20s that her training commitment and consistency increased, eventually leading her to the figure competition stage where she won and placed in many competitions, including ANB, NABBA and IFBB championships.

Belinda loves the challenge of competing and is constantly amazed by what people are capable of achieving when they are truly driven to accomplish a goal. Today she works as a personalised online coach who specialises in women's figure, fitness and bikini competition.

Brynley King

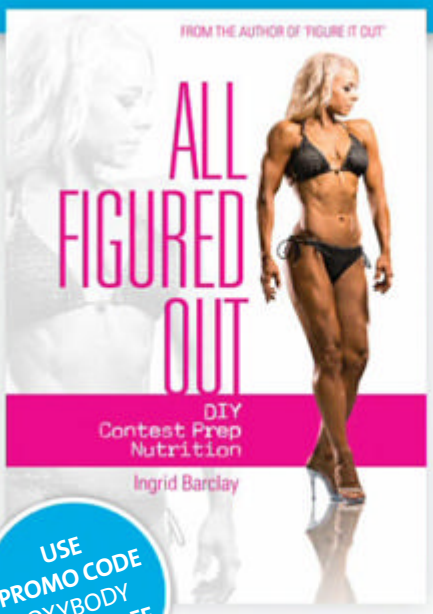
No-one knows the benefits of coconuts more than Australia's very own 'coconut guru' Brynley King –author of cookbook Going Coconuts that is based on the fundamental principles of eating clean and living green – the healthier experience using Banaban Extra Virgin Coconut Oil.

Brynley has spent her life travelling the world with her mother and Banaban stepfather, visiting myriad coconut plantations throughout Asia and the Pacific and learning first-hand about coconut products; how this simple fruit was used hundreds of years ago by her extended Banaban family, and can be incorporated into life today in the western world.

A self-confessed coconut addict, her travels have also seen her visit international and government-funded coconut research centres, world food exhibitions and assisted in Rabi Island based aid projects, sharing her knowledge on the benefits coconuts can have on our lives. Brynley is now on her way to becoming an unstoppable force in the cooking, beauty and health industries. For more information, visit www.goingcoconuts.com.au

Joanne Prior

Joanne is a specialist who will help you truly understand how to think and how eat in order to achieve the greatest weight loss you're capable of. Find out more or contact Joanne via www.joanneprior.com



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OXY REVIEWS

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For more information, visit www.greenteax50.com.au

WE HEAR YOU »

Hi *Oxygen Magazine*,

I recently purchased your magazine for the first time and I must say I absolutely love it. So much inspiration and helpful information. I would love some help in my weight training. I have recently gone from a cardio junky to six days of weights training and I love it. I would, however, appreciate some helpful tips on nutrition. I've read many articles but none seem to be about starting out – they are all about what the toned girls do as maintenance. I have a little bit of fat percentage to lose but all articles I read include lots of food (I gained four kilos on my honeymoon). I feel I need to ease in to this amount of food? Or is this not necessary?

Thanks so much Oxygen,
Stacey

Hi Stacey,

Thanks for writing in.

Nice work! Regularly lifting weights will be of great help to reduce your body fat percentage. The more lean muscle mass you have, the faster your metabolism, which ultimately means more calories burnt at rest – and who doesn't want that?

When it comes to nutrition, it's difficult to know precisely what calorie intake or serving sizes you'll need as no one nutrition plan works for everyone. It will take some experimenting to determine what works best for your goals and your lifestyle. If the amount of food in a nutrition plan seems to be too much, you're right; you will probably need to slowly increase your intake. This is commonly known as 'reverse dieting'. We published a series of articles in issues #62 to #65 by Layne Norton, an expert in this field, so they may be of help to you, but the best thing to do would be to seek advice from a professional nutritionist to help you achieve what you're hoping to.

Good luck!
Oxygen

Hello Oxy Team,

Quickly, want to say a huge thank-you for another fab issue. Opened my letterbox and there was a cool, colourful, fresh publication – it's nice to read! A massive thankyou, particularly for an article about surf-inspired yoga. From all of us surfer girls out there a big fully-sick fanx! Regardless of the fitness levels each of us are at the moment, we constantly try to work harder to build strength and flexibility to perform better. The only time the majority of us have to spend out on the waves is weekends. During a working week some go to the gym, some try to stay fit outdoors, at home etc. Would it be possible for you awesome people to please put together and publish for us of all out here a workout(s) we could use to build strength and flexibility? All of us surfer people will be grateful for this.

Best wishes.

Devoted reader,
Lora

Hey Lora,

Awesome to hear you enjoyed our Bikini Body issue! We will see what we can put together to help you build better strength and flexibility, so keep your eyes peeled in future issues. In the meantime, we hope this issue's workouts will keep you getting stronger, fitter and more flexible for those waves.

Enjoy!

Oxygen

MAGAZINE PHOTO CREDIT DALLAS OLSEN

Hi!

Awesome, awesome, awesome!

I sent Lesley Maxwell's article [blog post online – 'The 5:2 diet: My Opinion'] to my trainer last night as it's perfect. Absolutely what I believe, too. He liked it, and I was telling him what *Oxygen* and you stand for, and explained a little how it's all about being and standing for the right things as far as health, fitness and nutrition go (he already knows how much I admire you). I'm so glad you have so many wonderful women that you promote that send the message of health and doing it all right. There's so much I hear on a daily basis that makes me wonder; so much misinformation on nutrition in particular, where women are going hungry and not eating properly so they can lose weight or have half of a banana before training and then hitting the wall because they haven't eaten enough. It's something I'm passionate about and I hope one day to help others. I'm doing a Precision Nutrition course and am thinking about going into nutrition long-term when my son leaves school.

Again, thank you for putting so many wonderful role models out there who stand for the same things you and I do.

Chrissey

Hey Chrissey,

How right you are. **Lesley's article is spot on about the 5:2 diet (eating 'normal' for five days and fasting for the other two days of the week with the recommended exercise of a three-minute sprint per day).** Rather than falling into the trap of a quick-fix diet, if you eat to nourish and repair, train your whole body with weights and throw in some cardio, you will achieve the figure you want – no quick fix needed! The best bit is, you'll achieve it and be even more likely to KEEP IT because it's not some crazy diet where you don't eat for days, it's a LIFESTYLE; a completely sustainable way of life that FUELS your body rather than starves it.

Thanks for being as passionate as we are, Chrissey, to keep spreading this extremely important message.

Oxygen

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

WHAT DOES 'WELLNESS' MEAN TO YOU?

Look out for posts on *Oxygen* Magazine Australia's Facebook page for your chance to be featured here!

VERONICA HARROLD-CARTER

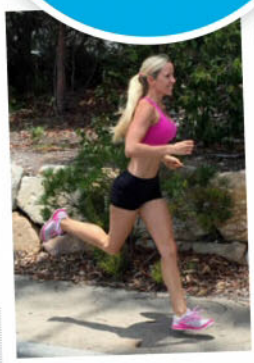
Wellness to me means kicking some serious butt in the weights room and keeping your goals in mind. At 51, I competed in my first INBA competition in the fitness category and am aiming to be a figure competitor later this year.

TIFFANY CURRY

Wellness is overall health and balance; feeling great, eating healthy, being blessed with a wonderful family, great friends and a positive attitude! To start my birthday off on the right foot, I did some aerial yoga with a few wonderful friends.

NATASHA GEORGE

Wellness starts with filling my fridge with nature's goodies to fuel my family and me.



ANDREA PATTERSON

Wellness to me is doing something you love so your body remains fit – it also feels good for the mind and soul. Life is too short to pursue things that don't make you happy, even if they are good for you.

RENEE GROVES

Wellness to me is a healthy mind and body working together perfectly. This is why my wellness regime heavily involves relaxation therapy: meditation, massage – and my secret ingredient – floatation therapy, which is the absolute ultimate relaxation and cleansing for your body and mind.

TANIA WALTER

Wellness means caring for soil and plants to produce tasty food and ultimately a robust immune system.

BRENLEY R

To me, wellness is getting outside and embracing all of the wonders of nature and never taking any breath for granted. Being greeted by the sun, the blue sky and looking out into the ocean is truly energising for the soul.

KELLY SUZANE

Personally, wellness means being able to run. I love doing a local or faraway Parkrun on a Saturday morning – these runs are often in dress-ups. This run was in honour of my 45th birthday. This is how I celebrate, with my friends, family and running! What a perfect combination.

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What's on

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ACT,March 27-29, 2015

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Four walking events are offered over three days. Walkers choose their own walking challenge, from 5km to a full marathon (42.2 km). The 5km guided walk is designed for the over 75s and under eights, plus their walking companions.

The Canberra Walking Festival is a not-for-profit event run entirely by volunteers. A proportion of all entry fees is donated to various community organisations.

For more information, visit **www.aussiewalk.com.au**

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ARNOLD CLASSIC AUSTRALIA
VIC, 13-15 March, 2015

Discover the latest in supplements, fitness equipment apparel and more at the 2015 Arnold Classic EXPO at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. Set to become Australia's largest sport and fitness expo, the Arnold Classic will be packed with exhibitors and entertainment, including the Arnold Strongman Classic, bikini international and figure international competitions, weightlifting and powerlifting, arm-wrestling, the Arnold amateur bodybuilding finals, CrossFit and martial arts.

For more information, visit **www.arnoldclassic.com.au**

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BALMORAL SWIM,
Sydney Harbour, Sydney NSW, March 22, 2015

Balmoral Swim is an open-water race held within beautiful Sydney Harbour that has been supporting Children's Cancer Institute since 2006. All funds raised during the event will go towards the institute's vital medical research, which will one day put an end to childhood cancer and improve the quality of life for survivors.

Balmoral Swim will be held on March 22, 2015. The event includes a 1km swim, school relays and a junior event, making it suitable for swimmers of all levels.

To register, visit **BalmoralSwim.com.au**

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What is your favourite 'treat'? How often do you think is healthy to indulge?

LINDY OLSEN

Part of my 7 Rules for Success is that every nine out of 10 meals you have has to be in your plan. In other words, if you are eating five times per day, you would eat 35 meals per week in total. Effectively 3.5 of them can be your choice – within reason of course! I call these my 'junk meals', so try to find out what combination works best for you. In order to stay sane all week, I always indulge in a few small treats every second day as my reward. This does two things: keeps me sane and keeps my body guessing as to what I'm doing. This approach seems to work well for me as I really look forward to enjoying what I want. Chocolate, cheesecake and caramel slice ... YUM!

LESLEY MAXWELL

To me, a 'treat' means eating something I really enjoy, but it's never takeaway or junk food I crave. Some organic raw jersey cream in my coffee or a couple of squares of organic dark chocolate such as Alter Eco dark quinoa chocolate every now and again seems to do the trick. There's so much lovely, clean food available that feels indulgent, tastes delicious but is still good for you; including fresh seafood from straight from the market and roast dinners with a healthy version of cauliflower cheese made with spelt flour, organic butter and cheese. Summer fruits are about to come in season so peaches or berries with CoYo yoghurt come to mind – yum!

PENNY LOMAS

I love healthy food – fact. So when it comes around to a treat meal I still keep it within the parametres of nourishing my body, such as aiming for gluten-free options and extra carbs. When in great shape I aim to have a treat meal once a week and this can vary between Thai takeaway and a glass of red, a gluten-free pizza or gluten-free gourmet burger. I'm also a normal female and love a good serving of chocolate while watching a movie. When dieting for an event or goal, though, I would go a few months between a treat meal and instead have a re-feed day every week or two. This meal consists of higher carbs like fruit, quinoa, sweet potato, honey, jam and rice.

To be honest with you, many years ago I used to be petrified of treat meals; they felt too naughty. Nowadays I am so happy with my body, life and lifestyle that I live in balance and love. I appreciate and earn my treat meal without guilt. It does my sanity and metabolism a world of good.

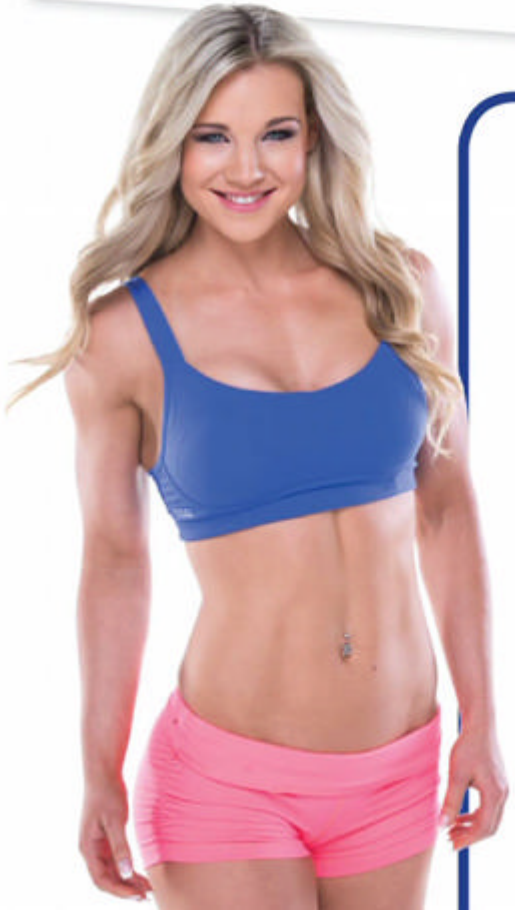
LESLEY PHOTO CREDIT:ANDREW K | PENNY PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN | LINDY PHOTO BY PAUL BUCETA

SKYE CUSHWAY

My favourite treat is vegan pizza from Mandala Arts Cafe in Mermaid, followed by a raw cheesecake. I'm also a chocolate monster; I love any kind of chocolate. I think it's definitely healthy to indulge as food is amazing and enjoying it should be part of life. My relationship with food has become healthier as I've gotten older and I now allow myself to indulge on the weekends. I'm fortunate that I love vegetables and eating clean. My digestive system is quite sensitive so I can't afford to eat too many unhealthy foods as it affects my body and I can't stand that uncomfortable feeling in my stomach. It's great that raw foods are becoming more popular and readily available from all of the organic, raw and Paleo cafes popping up – now we can get healthier versions of yummy foods when we're out and about and feel like indulging.

JUSTINE SWITALLA

My favourite treat would have to be cheese and crackers – I have always been a savoury girl. I like nothing more than to sit down with a nice glass of wine and a mezze platter. I believe that balance is super important, so I like to make sure I live feeling like I am not restricted in any way as this is what I believe causes a lot of emotional issues with food and lifestyle. I live by the 80/20 rule, so 80 per cent of my diet is healthy and wholesome and the other 20 per cent is whatever I feel like. Some weeks I eat less of the 20 per cent and more of the 80 per cent, but I just go by how I feel. I don't get cravings as I eat a well-balanced diet and, as I said, I don't put restrictions on myself so if I feel like chocolate – guess what – I eat chocolate!



SHARNA BENDER

My favourite treat is anything in the form of chocolate! I eat two squares of 85 per cent dark chocolate every day. It's quite rich so I only feel I need to eat two squares to kick that after-dinner sweet-tooth craving.

Although, if I'm out for dinner with friends and there is some amazing chocolate desert on the menu, I will not hesitate! I think depriving yourself of something like this only creates a bad relationship with food which in turn leads to binge eating down the track. I like to treat myself to something like this once a fortnight. It keeps me happy and satisfied and no, I don't feel guilty. Like anything, moderation is the key.

SHARNA, JUSTINE, SKYE PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN

JUST DO IT, ALREADY!

Even if you are forced into exercising, you'll still reap the same stress-busting benefits as if you chose to do it yourself, according to a study published in the *European Journal of Neuroscience*. When rats were put on a wheel that mechanically rotated on a set schedule, they experienced the same reductions in stress and anxiety as rats that ran whenever they chose to. No matter where your motivation comes from – inside you, or from outside factors, like a physically demanding job – working up a sweat will still help you not sweat the small stuff.

3.4

People who exercised for 150 minutes every week for 10 years lived, on average, 3.4 years longer than those who didn't exercise at all, according to an analysis of six large studies.

PEPPIER PUSH-UPS

Alter the emphasis of your push-up sets by changing the position of one hand. Placing one hand on a med ball, on the floor slightly in front of the other, or a bit further out to the side, for example, are all simple ways of shifting the focus to one side of the body. (Remember to repeat on the other side!)

PHOTO PAUL BUCETA | MODEL ELAINE GOODLAD

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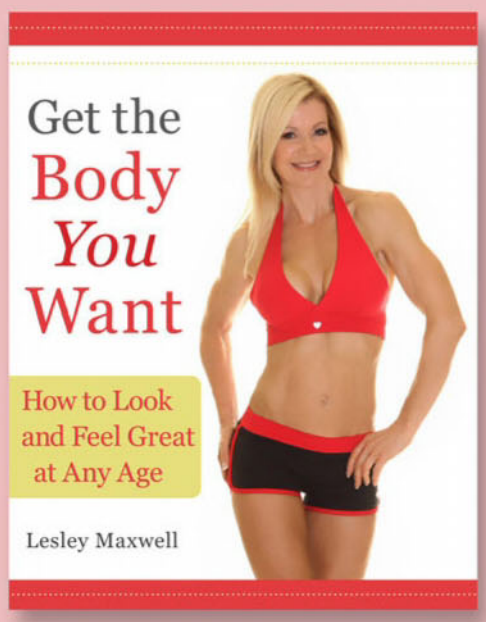

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Lesley Maxwell, a mother of three has more than 15 years' experience as a fitness professional, and she has been passionate about fitness and health her whole life. Lesley has been featured on A Current Affair, the Today Show, Guide to the Good Life, the Herald Sun and in ultraFITNESS magazine. She is a regular contributor to Oxygen magazine Australia, an Oxygen Covergirl and Oxygen Ambassador.

There is simply no better place to learn than from a world figure champion, and Lesley leads you step by step to help you 'Get the Body You Want'.

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Fast Breakfast

+ *Make in a muffin tin!*

[fit fact]

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***"I'm a morning exerciser** and this recipe satisfies my sweet tooth and muscles after a great workout."*

READER RECIPE OF THE MONTH

Reader recipe provided by Monica Olivas

French Toast Cups

READY IN 20 MINUTES • MAKES 1 SERVING

- 2 eggs (or ½ cup egg whites)
- 1–2 tsp Stevia
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- Dash cinnamon
- Sea salt, to taste
- 2 slices whole-grain bread
- ½ cup low-fat cottage cheese*

1. Preheat oven to 175°C. In a shallow bowl, combine eggs, 1 teaspoon Stevia, vanilla extract and a dash of cinnamon and salt, as desired. Dip bread slices into egg mixture, soaking thoroughly.
2. Spray 2 cups in a muffin tin with non-stick spray. Gently stuff one piece of bread into each cup. Press down to make sure they nearly touch the bottom of the pan. Place muffin tin in oven and bake for 15 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, mix cottage cheese with remaining Stevia and cinnamon. Top each French toast cup with half of the mixture. Serve.

Nutrients per serving: Calories: 390, Total Fats: 16g, Saturated Fat: 6g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 445mg, Salt: 520mg, Total Carbohydrates: 29g, Dietary Fibre: 4g, Sugars: 8g, Protein: 34g, Iron: 3mg

PHOTO MAYA VISNYEI FOOD STYLING TERRY SCHACHT MONICA PHOTO BENJAMIN ESSENBURG

UP TO 20 CUPS OF
FAT BURNING
GREEN TEA
& RESVERATROL
IN EACH SERVE
ONLY 10 CALORIES
NEW FLAVOUR
MANGO
GREENTEAX50
MANGO FLAVOUR
HOW GREENTEAX50 HELPS
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Secrets of the Lean

WHEN YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A PURE PROTEIN WITH NATURAL INGREDIENTS YOU CAN RELATE TO AND THAT YOUR BODY WILL LOVE, SCULPT SUPERNATURALS TICKS ALL THE BOXES FOR WEIGHT MANAGEMENT AND HEALTHY SNACKING.

We all know fruits and vegetables are packed to the brim with vitamins, minerals and phytonutrients. They're important for our bodies in ways we are still discovering, but to get lean and toned with curves in all the right places you need a nutrient that's missing from broccoli and bananas: protein.

Protein can come from many different sources but not all proteins are created equal; they don't all have what it takes to be your body's best friend. It's quite possible the first time you heard the word 'whey', it had something to do with Little Miss Muffet. Studies have shown unequivocally that this special component of milk protein is a five-star muscle-builder. Can it be useful for those of us who want a smaller waist, rather than bigger biceps? Absolutely – and that's why Sculpt Supernaturals was created with pure New Zealand whey protein.

One of the biggest hurdles when you're trying to eat a little less in order to burn stored body fat is hunger. We don't mean a growling stomach – that genuinely means it's time to nourish yourself. It's when you're peckish. You know: when your brain just won't stop thinking about food. What if you could turn it off? Well now you can.

The grass-fed whey in Sculpt Supernaturals contains specific bioactive peptides that are potent activators of satiety signals, more so than other proteins. Research reveals the optimum dose to trigger satisfaction but not overdo energy intake is between 15 and 20 grams of protein. One serving of Supernaturals provides a perfect 17.5 grams of whey protein, less than three grams of carbs and at less than 100 calories, it's the smart choice for a clean snack that will help you feel fuller for longer.

Sculpt Supernaturals contains all the essential amino acids you need for optimal cell function on a daily basis. Your immune system receives a helping hand due to special peptides that signal your body to increase production of glutathione, a powerful antioxidant essential for helping detoxification. But there's no point using the best protein if it doesn't complement your commitment to clean, healthy eating. Sculpt Supernaturals contains absolutely no artificial flavours, colours or sweeteners and is gluten-free. To boost your metabolising potential, as well as the superior Garcinia extract Super Citrimax®, Sculpt Supernaturals includes the superfoods cacao, coconut, pomegranate, curcumin and the Rolls Royce of green tea extracts Japanese matcha.

Wholesome food is definitely back in vogue.

Make the perfect super-smoothie by blending Sculpt Supernaturals with 200ml coconut water, a handful of baby spinach and a teaspoon of chia. You'll get metabolism-boosting protein with natural electrolytes, leafy green phytonutrients and healthy fats in a sustained satiety shake.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

The First **All Natural** Thermogenic Powder

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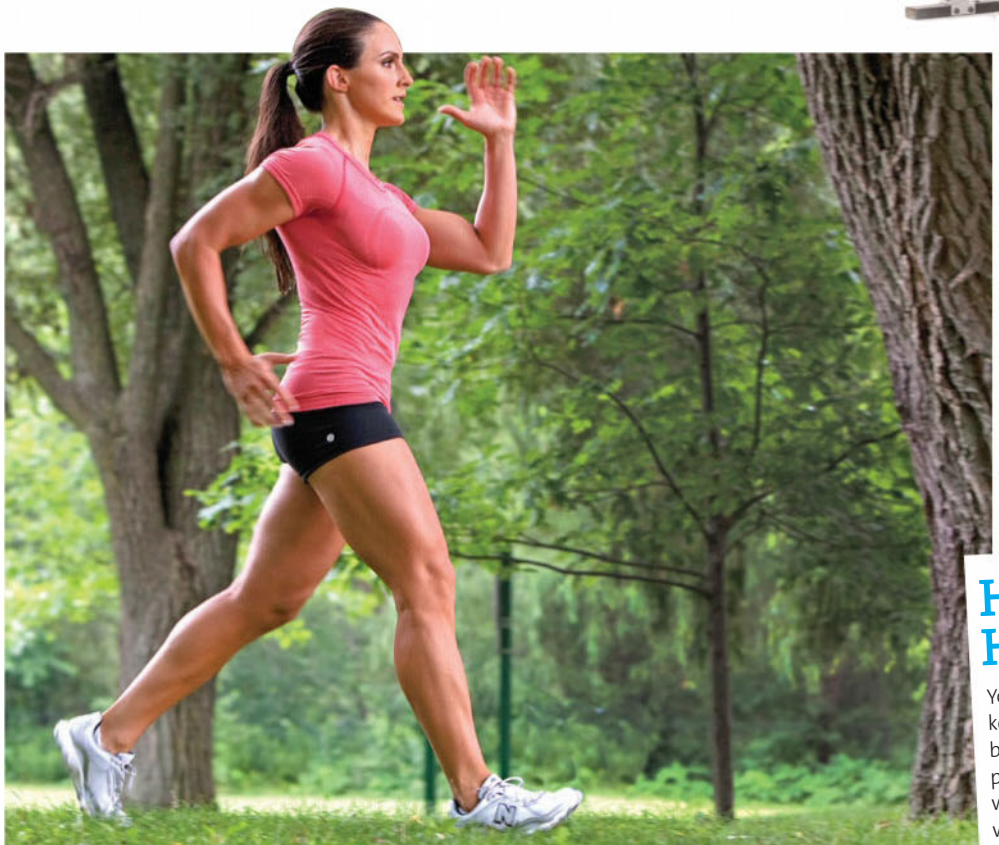
STRENGTHEN YOUR DELTS

with moves such as the overhead press and lateral raise.
See page 120 for more.



Relax Your Headaches

Make regular massages a part of your active routine. A study at the University of Granada found that a 30-minute massage focusing on the head and neck can help reduce tension headaches in people who get them regularly. Bonus: you'll bust post-workout soreness.

HEALTHY HYDRATION

You've got a tonne of things to keep track of, and BPA shouldn't be one of them. So swap your plastic bottle for a classic glass water bottle and ditch the worry over toxic chemicals. With colourful silicone jackets and non-slip designs now available, you can take it to the gym or leave it at your work desk for all-day healthy sipping. See takeyausa.com, lifefactory.com or shopnaturally.com.au for options.

POWER WALK AND LIVE LONGER

Here's some news that might put you to the test: researchers in the UK have found a relationship between some basic physical tasks and how long individuals live. After reviewing 57 studies, they discovered those who had the lowest risk of death performed best at:

1. Gripping
2. Brisk walking
3. Rising quickly from a chair
4. Balancing on one leg

IF YOUR PERFORMANCE IS LACKLUSTER IN A CATEGORY, TARGET YOUR WEAK AREAS IN THE GYM.

TRAINING PHOTOS PAUL BUCETA MODELS CLAIRE RAE (TOP) AND ALLI MCKEE (LEFT) ALL OTHER PHOTOS ISTOCKPHOTO

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Neat THINGS

Going Coconuts

No one knows the benefits of coconut oil more than the Gold Coast's very own 'coconut guru' Brynley King, author of Going Coconuts, a book based on the fundamental principles of eating clean and living green – the healthier experience using Banaban Extra Virgin Coconut Oil.

Going Coconuts is brimming with paleo, vegan, raw, dairy-free and gluten-free recipes – all of which are tried and tested by the 'coconut guru' herself. Easy DIY skincare and hair care beauty treatments, simple household cleaning tips and the '30-Day Banaban Smoothie Challenge', all incorporating the fruit with a thousand uses – coconuts! **Check out some of the recipes on pages 60 to 64.**

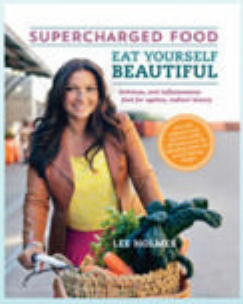
Healthy Chef

HEALTHY CHEF PURE NATIVE WPI is specifically designed to be the purest bio-available source of protein that does not cause bloating or gastro-intestinal issues. It is low in fat and carbohydrates, high in protein and free of soy, sugar and gluten.

It is ultra-filtered directly from pasture-raised, hormone-free, raw milk that only has one single pasteurisation process as required by law. This allows for a clean and pure source of protein that tastes purely delicious and is quickly absorbed into the body.

Eat Yourself Beautiful

Get ready to eat and drink your way to beauty. With more than 100 nutritious recipes – many of which are free from gluten, wheat, dairy, yeast and sugar – Eat Yourself Beautiful is a simple and inspiring guide to eating for optimum health and beauty. It's my own personal guide to achieving inner and outer health through simple, delicious recipes using nutritionally rich, anti-inflammatory foods. If you think beauty is only skin-deep, think again. Eat Yourself Beautiful features secret recipes for juices, snacks and meals using key anti-inflammatory ingredients and everyday foods to boost longevity and promote vitality. These delicious and easy-to-follow recipes contain everything from the skin-boosting power of plant collagen to the most potent antioxidants on the planet. Eat Yourself Beautiful is your complete guide to creating flavourful meals to jump-start your immune system, boost energy levels and maintain your long-term beauty, health and wellbeing. Edible beauty is the key to a healthy life, so get ready to eat, drink, and be beautiful.



Endota Spa – Remedial Massage

Imagine escaping from the daily chaos into complete stillness. Imagine a place where you're greeted by friendly faces and whisked away to relieve your stressed, tense and tight body with a remedial massage. The relaxing music is literally music to your ears as you lie on the massage table, the smell of the clove and mint immediately relaxing you.

The peppermint, cajuput and camphor oils in the organic muscle balm are the perfect remedy for an exhausted body, designed to cool the skin, reduce bruising and enhance healing. After the masseuse finds your tight spots and releases them, massaging your muscles until you're left feeling supple and relaxed, you don't want to move, quietly wondering if they'll mind if you spend the night. Before you reluctantly leave, you're provided with advice on any skin concerns to improve your complexion, vibrancy and youthfulness. So, you not only walk out feeling better, but looking better as well. I'll take that over sinking into my couch any day!

For more information, visit **www.endotadayspa.com.au**

MASSAGE PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

NAME: Glen McCone
AGE: 32
HEIGHT: 188cm
WEIGHT: 100kg
HOMETOWN: Brisbane
OCCUPATION: Customer Service Officer

BABEWATCH GLEN MCCONE

Describe your perfect Sunday.

Late sleep-in snuggles then a quick session at the gym before heading to the beach with the family – couldn't ask for more.

If you could be anywhere in the world doing anything – what and where would it be?

Phuket, Thailand, training at the world-famous Tiger Muay Thai training camp. Lots of fun and being surrounded by energetic people makes for an awesome holiday and getting in shape.

What is your claim to fame?

I played a WW2 soldier in the Chronicles of Narnia (for about two seconds) in the background. It was an awesome experience – I met a lot of really amazing people.

What is the most romantic thing you've ever done for a woman?

I'm not entirely romantic, but one evening when I knew my partner had had a stressful day at work, I ran a bath for her with salts and lit candles everywhere and told her to kick back and unwind.

Describe your perfect night out.

Going to the movies with my partner and daughter, eating pizzas and ice-creams then home for snuggles.

What characteristics do you most look for in a woman?

First off, the eyes always catch me. You can tell a lot by a person on the eyes alone. Second, I would have to say a curvy girl always gets the tick of approval from me.

How do you stay in shape?

I do strength training three times a week and do boxing once a week, coupled with eating clean and resting to compensate. Striking a balance with these aspects ensures good results.

What's your favourite homecooked meal?

Mum's roast lamb.

PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN

How will you BRING IT this summer?

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"Ingrid has helped me regain the self confidence that every young woman should have AND I have a body I 'd never have dreamed of a few years ago!" Roseleen Leneham

"BC took the guess work out of my nutrition and exercise programmes. I would recommend them to ANYONE struggling with weight loss or wanting to prep for a comp." Deborah Rogers

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SEXY?
CONFIDENT?
STRONG?
solid focus
25

When one door closes, another opens...

AT 28, WHEN ERIN STERN MISSED OUT ON QUALIFYING FOR THE OLYMPIC HIGH JUMP TEAM BY THREE CENTIMETRES, A DOOR CLOSED. BUT ANOTHER ONE SOON OPENED.

STILL EAGER FOR A CHALLENGE, ERIN SET HER EYES ON FIGURE COMPETITIONS. TODAY, THE 35-YEAR-OLD IS AN IFBB PRO, ONE OF THE TOP ATHLETES IN FIGURE, HEALTH AND FITNESS EXPERT, COVER MODEL, MOTIVATIONAL SPEAKER AND AUTHOR OF FIVE E-BOOKS.

PHOTO BY ROBERT REIFF

Growing up, Erin's natural competitive streak and active childhood meant she was often seeking playful rivalry at home with her sisters and father. Her showhorse, Dreamy, provided her with the energy release and challenge she needed as she trained and ran beside him through the obstacle courses. With her natural athleticism and her father's encouragement, Erin found a love for track and field, specifically high jump.

There was no doubt Erin was talented at her chosen sport, but after she missed out on qualifying for the Olympics, it was time for her to seek another avenue of competition. Having tried Olympic weightlifting before and recognising the importance of building muscle, Erin decided to turn her focus to aesthetic lifts.

The 2009 Arnold Classic was her professional debut and her fourth show ever. She placed 10th and then secured 6th at Olympia in the same year. Since then Erin hasn't finished outside the top three.

"I never thought I'd go from working nine to five in real estate to travelling the world competing in figure," Erin says.

If you blinked, you would have missed her rise to success, but if you're an avid follower of figure competitions, you would have noticed her rivalry with figure champion Nicole Wilkins.

"It's always motivating knowing I'll be on stage with Nicole – it makes me work harder," Erin says. "I have so much respect for her and I think our rivalry makes the events even more interesting."

It's difficult to comprehend that behind this confident-looking, strong exterior lays a woman who's shy. She admits that in the past, stepping on stage required her to develop an alter ego, remove herself from the situation and just get up there and show off the masterpiece she worked so hard for.

Nutrition Tips:

- ☐ Eat 5-6 times per day.
- ☐ Eat protein at every meal.
- ☐ Stick to complex carbs.
- ☐ Don't skimp on healthy fats.
- ☐ Taper your carbohydrate intake as the day goes on.

PHOTO BY ROBERT REIFF

About Erin:

1. **BIRTHDAY GIRL!** Erin turned 35 on February 5th. Happy birthday, cover girl!
2. **GRACEFUL HOBBY.** She has taken belly-dancing classes to help her move more gracefully.
3. **TOP THREE MOVES:** squats, deadlifts and weighted bridges.
4. **GYM PET PEEVE:** "Guys who tell me I'm strong for a girl!"
5. **INTERESTING FACT:** Her trip to Australia for the 2011 Pro Grand Prix was her first time outside the USA.

PHOTO BY ROBERT REIFF

Did you know?

Erin has used poetry as an outlet for her thoughts for as long as she can remember. She has even published a book of her work, *Between Seasons*. "It's about struggles in life in general and struggles as a competitor. It's scary because these are my innermost thoughts," Erin says.

Plyometrics, powerlifting and Olympic lifting, including deadlifts, snatches and deep squats, sculpt the body that has brought her so much success. Erin believes that using compound movements such as these instead of strict isolation movements creates a physique with much better flow. Isolation work does, however, play a role in her training: at the end of her workouts she hones specific areas she wants to accentuate.

Her hard work, however, didn't grace the 2014 Arnold or Olympia stages. Although she qualified, after stopping to listen to what her body and mind needed, she made the decision to take time off.

"I have been competing since 2008 and thought it was time to give my body – and my brain – a break from competition," Erin says.

ERIN'S SWEET 'N' SPICY SNACK

- 1 medium apple, sliced

Dip:

- ½ cup non-fat plain Greek yoghurt
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp cinnamon

Blend the spices with the yoghurt for a spicy fruit dip!

PHOTO BY SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Contest History:

2013

Arnold Classic – 3rd place
Australia Pro – 2nd place

2012

Figure International – 2nd place
Australian Pro Figure Classic – 1st place
Valenti Classic Pro Figure – 1st place
Figure Olympia – 1st place
Sheru Classic – 1st place
Arnold Classic Europe – 1st place

2011

Arnold Classic – 2nd place
Australian Pro Grand Prix XI – 1st place
New Zealand Pro Figure – 1st place
Jacksonville Pro Figure – 1st place
Figure Olympia – 2nd place
Sheru Classic – 2nd place

2010

Arnold Classic – 2nd place
Europa Show of Champions – 1st place
Figure Olympia – 2st place

Since 2008 she has done up to six shows a year, and if you've ever competed, you can understand how physically and mentally taxing it can be.

Instead of competing, Erin decided to focus her energy into her passion: educating, empowering and enriching other lives through health and fitness. Having secured a large audience base through her success competing, she now feels she's positioned to change lives.

Erin's long-term goal is to help people find ways to overcome low self-esteem and defeat excuses that are preventing them from achieving their goals. She wants to show people how to replace self-destructive habits with self-love and positive self-talk.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Cover Model Diet:

Eat five to six small meals per day.

Meal 1: 5 egg whites and ½ cup oats

Morning snack: Protein shake and 15 almonds

Lunch: 110g chicken, ½ cup cooked brown rice and spinach salad

Morning snack: 110g ground turkey with 4 rice cakes and spinach salad with vinaigrette

Dinner: 110g grilled steak and steamed veggies or a sirloin burger with green beans

Evening snack: Protein shake with water or light almond milk and 1 tbsp almond or peanut butter

Cover Model Training:

Erin's training focuses on a combination of physical and performance enhancement. She does short, intense workouts to help her carve her best body.

Monday: Shoulders and arms

Tuesday: Plyometric circuit and legs

Wednesday: Rest or cardio

Thursday: Back

Friday: Chest and shoulders

Saturday: High-intensity interval cardio

Sunday: Rest

Train hard with 30 to 60 seconds of rest between each set. If you're experienced with lifting weights, do supersets (two exercises back-to-back (i.e. upright rows and reverse flyes (with no rest) as they really amp up the intensity and maximise results in the gym.

To find out more, look for Erin Stern's Elite Body Trainer program online.

PHOTO BY PAUL BUCETA

ERIN'S ABS SECRETS

How she carves her abs:

Erin swears by barbell roll-outs, "They're great for tightening the abs and adding definition." Her second-favourite move for abs: sprints!

CLEAR, YOUTHFUL & STUNNING SKIN

PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

The ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ of a skincare routine

BY **SHARNA BENDER**

The Basics:

- ☐ Cleanser
- ☐ Exfoliator
- ☐ Moisturiser
- ☐ SPF sunscreen

One of the most common issues I see as a beauty therapist is people wanting clearer and more youthful skin.

The first question I ask my clients is, “what is your skin routine?” Eighty per cent of people will look at me with a blank or ashamed look and respond with, “I don’t have one” or “I cleanse and moisturise every morning…” If only it were that easy.

Even if you’re blessed with great genetics, a good skincare routine is incredibly important. Not just to look amazing, but to improve your general health and wellbeing. Your skin may look impeccable now without a routine, but there is a good chance it will catch up with you in the long run.

SHARNA BENDER

Sharna Bender describes herself as the “typical skinny girl who could eat anything and everything without gaining weight”, but her laid-back and party lifestyle became detrimental to her health. She was suffering from depression, a bulging disk causing her severe back pain, polycystic ovarian syndrome and a fructose intolerance she was struggling to pinpoint. After hitting rock bottom, Sharna turned her life around through exercise, positive thinking and letting go of limitations.

Today, Sharna holds a diploma in beauty therapy and health science, and a Cert IV in make-up artistry. She owns her own beauty therapy business, is an Oxygen ambassador and cover model, and is a successful fitness model competitor, earning her pro card at the 2014 Natural Olympia in the United States.

PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN

BAD HABITS TO BREAK

OVER-CLEANSING

Washing your skin too much can age your skin. While you may be washing away the bad oils, you can also strip away the good oils that keep your skin hydrated and youthful. Don't wash any more than twice a day.

USING A HARSH CLEANSER

If you're using the soap bar as your facial cleanser, it's time to consider another option. Soap will also strip away your skins natural oils and can cause irritation. Look for cleansers with calming ingredients, such as green tea, to soothe sensitive skin.

If you have oily and acne-prone skin, use a face wash with glycolic acid or tea tree. Better yet, go to your local beauty therapist and book a skin consult (most places do them for free). It's a great idea to grab some samples to test out on your skin before investing money into products.

USING FACIAL WIPES

They may be convenient, but it's impossible to thoroughly cleanse your skin just by using facial wipes. They are extremely handy if you need a quick cleanse before or after the gym but don't let them completely replace your regular cleanser.

RINSING WITH HOT WATER

This will also strip away good oils and dry out your skin out. What's more, rinsing with hot water can cause capillaries (more commonly known as 'spider veins'). This is due to the sudden change of skin temperature, so be sure not to use water that is too cold either. When washing your face, make sure the water is lukewarm.

LEAVING YOUR MAKE-UP ON OVERNIGHT

This is the biggest and most common 'no-no'! So let's begin with why…

After we put on our make-up to face the day, we step outside and our skin soaks up a variety of things. We are exposed to pollutants in the air, from car fumes to cigarette smoke, and pick up bacteria from people at work and in the street. Without consciously knowing it, we regularly touch our face and spread this bacterium from our hands to our face. At the end of the day, all of these pollutants and bacteria can causing skin ageing and breakouts. So next time you want to skip the night-time cleanse, think again!

For those of you who think simply cleansing at night is enough, you're also wrong. We build up extra oils on our face as we sleep – not to mention what you pick up off your pillowcase! Your pillow collects all kinds of dust and grime that can clog your pores. It can be everything from conditioner residue left on your hair to sweat, drool and dead skin… yuck! So please, do yourself a favour and start cleansing twice a day! Your future, more youthful self will thank you for it!

"If you're too tired to wash your face before bed, try preforming your skin routine after dinner before you get too comfortable on the couch. It's better to do it earlier than not at all!"

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

GOOD HABITS TO BUILD

MORNINGS

CLEANSE, HYDRATE AND PROTECT – the key to your youthful looking skin!

CLEANSE – Cleansing once in the morning will suffice, but because of that extra build-up of oils overnight, doing it twice can be a good habit to get into.

HYDRATE AND PROTECT – Pop on your moisturiser and don't forget your SPF. It will not only protect you from skin cancer, but it is the best anti-ageing cream you can invest in! Even if it's a bleak day, never underestimate those clouds. The UV rays are shining down on you even though you can't see the sun.

EVENINGS

CLEANSE TWICE – The first cleansing only removes the daily build-up of dirt, oil, make-up etc. This is called a 'pre-cleanse' and isn't always enough to clean pores thoroughly. You need to get that whole day's worth of grime off of your face.

Your second cleanse will do a deeper clean and kill off any bacteria that might be left over. This is especially important at night as you've been collecting that debris on your skin all day long.

EXFOLIATE – After your two cleanses, your skin is ready for exfoliation. Make sure you are only exfoliating around two times a week. Any more than that and you are overdoing it. If you have oily skin you can double up and leave it on as a masque for an extra booster!

REPAIR AND HYDRATE – At night your skin goes through its repairing cycle. After the cleanses and exfoliation, your skin is perfectly prepped to soak up your anti-ageing and any repairing serums you might have. Closely follow this by applying your favorite moisturiser to keep your skin hydrated.

IT'S TIME TO TRANSFORM

PART III: THE POWER OF FOOD

BY **LINDY OLSEN** | IMAGES BY **DALLAS OLSEN**

"YES, I'M EXHAUSTED AND LACKING SLEEP – A FEELING EVERY NEW MOTHER KNOWS. BUT... I'M NOT GOING TO QUIT"

#NOFILTER
#NOTRAINING
#NOCARDIO
#JUSTFOOD

LET'S GET STARTED! FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO MISSED THE LAST TWO ISSUES OF *OXYGEN*, I'M GOING TO TAKE YOU ON A JOURNEY SO YOU CAN GET YOURSELF BACK INTO GREAT SHAPE. WHETHER IT'S TO LOSE THOSE LAST 5KG OR TO SIMPLY FEEL HEALTHIER AND FITTER, YOU CAN USE MY PRINCIPLES TO HELP YOU REACH YOUR GOALS (WITHOUT TORTURING YOURSELF IN THE PROCESS). NO, YOU DON'T NEED TO GO ON SOME FAN-DANGLED DIET OR EAT AT SOME RABBIT CAFÉ! I'VE PROMISED YOU BEFORE, AND I'LL KEEP PROMISING YOU: YOU CAN HAVE YOUR CAKE AND EAT IT TOO... LITERALLY! ALL YOU'VE GOT TO DO IS WORK SMARTER, NOT HARDER, AND YOU'LL BE SURPRISED HOW QUICKLY THE LITTLE THINGS ADD UP!

THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF SHARING MY PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY WITH YOU IS TO SHOW YOU EXACTLY HOW IMPORTANT THE THREE PARTS OF YOUR PROGRAM – NUTRITION, RESISTANCE TRAINING AND CARDIO – REALLY ARE. Great nutrition can give you great results and – as you can see from my progress shots – following my 7 Rules for Success and eating lots of fresh vegetables, complex carbohydrates and lean protein has allowed me to lose the excess pregnancy weight fairly well. Remember these results are purely from cleaning up my nutrition only! However, I've still got a way to go if I want to reach my personal goals to tone up, and feel fit and strong again. It's now time to step it up a little and include some resistance training as part of my next phase. I want to be able to

keep up with my little girl who is already super demanding and full of energy!

Oh, and just so you understand how important the rules are, most people can achieve the health and body composition they desire just by following these seven rules alone. No kidding! In fact, I've spent months just supervising clients' compliance to the rules. Sure, it works, but it's an expensive way to learn. If you can do it on your own, you'll save money and become accountable to yourself – and that's a powerful weapon to have in your health and fitness toolbox.

Okay, so before you start eating this and eating that, you'll need to have an understanding of the rules (grab the February issue of *Oxygen* or jump on my website **www.lindyolsen.com**) and you'll need to know how to apply them to your everyday life. By doing this, eating well becomes easy instead of an overwhelming ongoing headache!

Now that you can see first-hand what nutrition alone can do, here's exactly what I've been eating:

- **Meal 1:** Breakfast – ½ cup oats with 1 scoop of Musashi vanilla WPI protein powder
- **Meal 2:** Brunch – Chia Chicken, Kumara and Kale by Fresh Meals 2 U
- **Meal 3:** Mid-afternoon – Barramundi and Salad by Fresh Meals 2 U
- **Meal 4:** Snack – a bar of white chocolate most days. Obviously vegetable sticks with a natural nut butter, tuna on rice cakes or a piece of fruit is a much better choice, but I promised you I'd be completely honest.
- **Meal 5:** Dinner – Super Lean and Clean Eye Fillet and Greens by Fresh Meals 2 U

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

To help you get started on creating your own meal plan, I've put together a shopping list of some of my favourite items:

GROCERY LIST

Meat and dairy:

- ☐ Extra lean beef
- ☐ Chicken breasts
- ☐ Smoked turkey breast
- ☐ Salmon fillet
- ☐ Eggs (carton) or liquid egg whites
- ☐ Small amount of cheese

Vegetables and fruit:

- ☐ Triple-washed raw spinach
- ☐ Whole mushrooms
- ☐ Red onions (Spanish)
- ☐ Fresh red tomatoes
- ☐ Cucumbers
- ☐ Fresh garlic
- ☐ Granny Smith apples
- ☐ Frozen blueberries (bag) (fresh where possible)
- ☐ Frozen raspberries (bag) (fresh where possible)
- ☐ Lemons (4)

Other:

- ☐ Coconut water
- ☐ Chickpeas
- ☐ Steel-cut/wholegrain oats
- ☐ Quinoa
- ☐ Oat bran
- ☐ Golden flaxseeds
- ☐ Extra virgin olive oil
- ☐ Butter, coconut oil or spread
- ☐ Cooking spray (canola or olive)
- ☐ Pecans
- ☐ Lemon juice (1 bottle)
- ☐ Salt and pepper
- ☐ Garlic powder
- ☐ Fajita seasoning
- ☐ Cinnamon
- ☐ Cumin
- ☐ Stevia
- ☐ Aluminum foil

THE 21 SUPERFOODS TO ADD TO YOUR TROLLEY

(if they're not already there)

Proteins:

- ☐ **1.** Lean red meat (93% lean, top round, sirloin)
- ☐ **2.** Salmon
- ☐ **3.** Omega-3 (eggs)
- ☐ **4.** Plain yoghurt (lactose-free if you can find it)
- ☐ **5.** Protein supplements (milk protein isolates, whey protein isolates or rice protein isolates)

Veggies and fruits:

- ☐ **6.** Spinach
- ☐ **7.** Tomatoes
- ☐ **8.** Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower)
- ☐ **9.** Mixed berries
- ☐ **10.** Oranges

Other carbs:

- ☐ **11.** Mixed beans
- ☐ **12.** Quinoa
- ☐ **13.** Whole oats

Good fats:

- ☐ **14.** Mixed nuts
- ☐ **15.** Avocadoes
- ☐ **16.** Extra virgin olive oil
- ☐ **17.** Fish oil
- ☐ **18.** Flaxseeds (ground)

Drinks/Other:

- ☐ **19.** Green tea
- ☐ **20.** Liquid exercise drinks (quickly digested carbohydrate and protein)
- ☐ **21.** Greens+ (vegetable concentrate supplement)

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

We all enjoy different foods so it's extremely important you design a meal plan that suits your tastes and lifestyle. I can't stress enough how important it is that you enjoy what you eat. If you don't like your meals, you won't maintain your new lifestyle, and that's the whole idea of the seven rules: it's a LIFESTYLE that should eventually become second nature. So if you want to enjoy amazing results long-term, create a plan that makes you think 'YUM!'

Here are some questions to ask yourself as you get started, and to come back to so you stay on track with your journey:

Reviewing the 7 rules:

1. **When did you last eat?** If it's been longer than two to four hours it's time to eat.
2. **Where is the complete lean protein?** If you haven't got any, find some, about 20-30g for women and 40-60g for men.
3. **Where are the veggies?** Are you about to eat two to three servings of veggies? Prepare them any way you like, but eat them with every meal. (One serving is about half of a cup.)
4. **Where are the carbs?** If you have fat to burn but haven't just worked out, put down the starchy carbs (pasta, bread and rice etc.) in favour of a double serving of fibrous carbs (fruits and veggies). Yep, even at restaurants. If you have just worked out, a mixture of starchy and fibrous carbs is ideal.
5. **Where are your fats coming from?** You need some healthy fats every day: olive oil, mixed nuts, avocadoes and flaxseeds/flaxseed oil. Spread them throughout the day but most of all make sure to add them in.

6. Are you drinking water or green tea? Avoid the calorie-containing drinks: send back the soft drink, sweetened fruit juice, and anything else that contains a lot of calories - or switch juices for unsweetened varieties.

7. Are you breaking the 10 per cent rule? Are you breaking any of the rules above? If so, GREAT, but count this meal as part of your 10 per cent, log it, and get back on track with your very next meal. After all, it's the rules to have whatever you like 10 per cent of the time.

Despite what many modern-day diets tell you, I don't believe in cutting out food groups. Each food group has important nutrients to help your body thrive. By cutting them out completely you could be starving your body of the very nutrients it needs to repair, refuel and replenish itself. By all means, if you have medically diagnosed allergies or intolerances, then avoiding foods is crucial. However, if this is not the case you could be doing your body more harm than good. Take carbs, for example: your brain and muscles mainly use glucose (broken-down carbs) to function, so your body literally NEEDS some form of carbs to get both mentally and physically stronger. Fats also play a vital role by providing essential building blocks for the cells in our body. They carry vitamins to where they need to go and help to keep our body and mind happy and healthy. Sure, fats are calorie-dense and there are bad fats (saturated and trans fatty acids), but if you stick to eating one to two servings of fats high in monounsaturated and polyunsaturated fatty acids each day, your body will reap the benefits.

You'll notice that in each of my meals I aim to include some form of protein, whether it's whey protein powder, chicken breast, lean red meat or white fish. Salmon is also great choice, packed full of healthy fats. Proteins are dubbed 'the building blocks of life' for good reason. The body needs protein for the most basic functions of life, including to breathe! Muscle contractions require protein, and breathing needs muscle contractions, so without proteins, we would literally stop breathing! Plus, they're essential for building and repairing our body tissues, including the vital metabolism-boosting, butt-shaping, arm-sculpting muscles we work so hard for at the gym. As our body can't make many important proteins from scratch, we need to get them from our food. If we don't, our body could break down that precious muscle to keep our body functioning properly. By providing your body with a constant source of protein throughout the day, you make sure your body has enough building blocks to repair itself and all of that resistance training doesn't go to waste.

With my progress so far, you can see how you can transform your body with food alone. Without weight training and cardio, though, you may find that you don't get the results you were expecting, and fall short of what you're truly capable of. You will probably also find you hit a plateau and the results stop coming. If that happens, it's time to add in some strength training to build some lean muscle. This will shape and tone your physique and kick that metabolism up another notch to burn any unwanted fat still clinging on.

So the next step on my journey back to my pre-baby body is adding in resistance training. I must admit, it has been a struggle, but that's what I want to show you all. I may have five world titles under my belt, but that doesn't mean getting back into training is easy – it's hard for EVERYONE, including me! To see just how hard, jump online at **www.lindyolsen.com** to check out my first training sessions back post-baby.

Next issue, I'll show you the awesome results nutrition AND resistance training can get you! Until then, Believe in Yourself, Train Hard, Keep Fit and LOVE Life.

Lindy xx

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU *compared yourself to another woman?*

BY **SASHA HAYLEY**

FOR ALMOST 10 YEARS I COMPARED MYSELF TO PRETTY, 'SKINNY' WOMEN. I WANTED THEIR BODIES AND FELL INTO A VICIOUS CYCLE OF SELF-HATE.

HAVING AN EATING DISORDER CHANGED MY LIFE. At 13, I was diagnosed with anorexia nervosa. It all started when I begged my mum to do work experience in the modelling industry. All day I was surrounded by tall, beautiful, skinny women who attracted attention because they were successful models. By looking at their outside appearances, something collapsed inside me. I looked in the mirror one day and was disgusted by what I saw. All I saw was fat and ugly and I told myself so as tears flowed down my face.

I changed my diet. I cut my food intake until I was eating only twice a day. I became obsessive-compulsive, and with that came anxiety attacks – especially if my daily routine was out of order.

I wrote everything I ate in a notebook. Daily. Obsessively. If I went over my daily food allowance, I wrote malicious attacks on myself that I read repeatedly. As though in reading them, I was confirming their validity.

My mum did everything she could to help; or should I say, 'save', me. She took me to counselling, psychiatrists and even tried the holistic route. I wouldn't budge. For my single mum, the costs of the professional assistance took their toll.

Eventually, with few funds left, she took me to consult with a government child psychologist. Three weeks into seeing my psychologist, my mental and physical state plummeted. I was 45 kilos and my health was in severe danger. Against my will, my psychologist admitted me to the child mental health rehabilitation centre.

I was beyond tears. The intensity of the emotional pain brought bellows and screams. I just wanted to be beautiful, but I'd lost control of my life and the will to live. I felt completely alone. The consequences? A deep state of severe depression.

After a couple of months, I was not responding to treatment. The psychiatrist allowed me to leave the rehabilitation centre, on the grounds I'd be better off with my family and friends in familiar surroundings. It took ages for any positive change to occur. I went back to school and struggled through the rest of year 10, failing almost every subject. I continued with my eating habits and depression until one day I woke up and I was starving. For the first time in as long as I could remember, I opened the fridge looking for all different kinds of foods.

I began to eat.

It was a slow recovery, brought about perhaps because I was mentally exhausted from being at war with myself every single day. It takes a lot of energy to hate yourself that much. It was time to be happy and laugh!

I learnt to love myself – even my flaws. Even after all these years, I still get bad thoughts. But I'm strong enough to ignore them now.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

I swear, I will never go back there.

Since learning to manage the feelings that led to anorexia nervosa, I have completed a Diploma of Community Welfare. I'll further my studies so I can help other women with eating disorders. I have transformed my body from being skinny to fit and healthy – and I love it! Now I work within the fitness industry, helping other women achieve their goals. By drawing on my personal trauma, I teach women how to break the nasty and destructive habit of self-hate

Today I live and breathe fitness, and even compete in fitness competitions! I'm strategic with what I eat and understand how a bad diet affects you mentally as well as physically.

Through my work, I want to raise awareness of mental health in general, but with a particular focus on eating disorders. I found the strength to overcome anorexia nervosa and through knowledge and care for one's self, other people can too.

My journey has not been smooth sailing. It's taken me years, but now I can hold my head high and say "I'm a survivor."

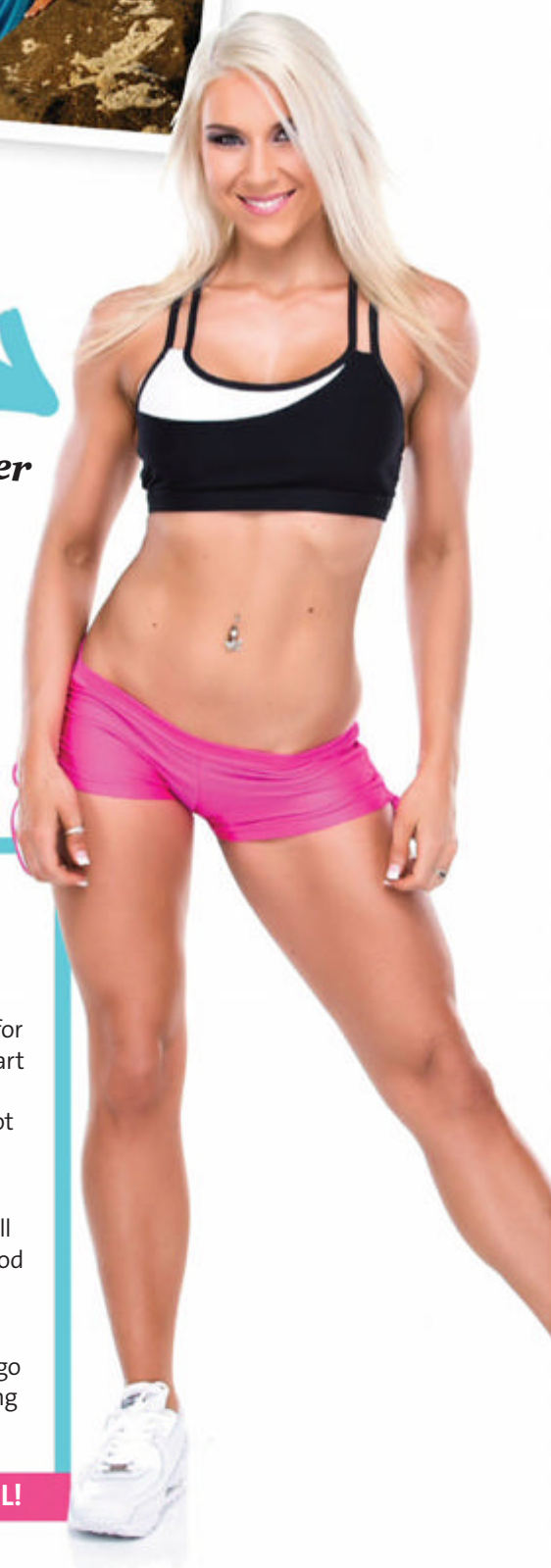
If I can help anyone – and I mean anyone – my mission will be complete.

So, where do you start if you've read my story and recognise some of the signs that you might be heading down a destructive path?

Begin slowly; teensy baby-steps are the way to go. You've probably built up the habits of self-loathing for many years – it's unreasonable to expect them to disappear in an eye-blink. Don't be harsh on yourself. Stay away from social media or any other triggers for comparing yourself with the bodies of other women. Take time out to heal.

before

after

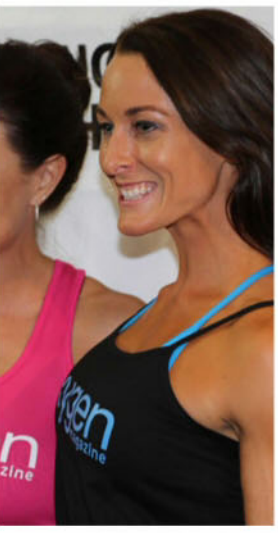


"AFTER" PHOTO CREDIT DALLAS OLSEN

Start Loving Yourself Today

- Write five things that you like about yourself.
- Meditate, try yoga or take time out for you. Sit down at the beach or read positive books.
- Stop comparing and start loving. Get off of social media and try to break that obsession of looking at other women's bodies.
- Stop the negative thoughts. As soon as you start putting yourself down, get in the habit of stopping that thought and replacing it with a positive one.
- Surround yourself with positive people who love you.
- Be active and healthy – this speaks for itself. Join a sports group, gym or start walking – anything to get moving. Once you've started putting one foot in front of another, keep it up.
- Eat nutritious food. Stay away from nasty sugar and processed foods. Fill your body with fruit, vegetables, good carbs and lean meat.
- Get help. It's okay to ask for help. It will do you the world of good to let go of those negative thoughts by talking to someone.

And remember, YOU are BEAUTIFUL!



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Keeping cortisol in check

BY **GABRIELLE MASTON**

CORTISOL IS A NATURALLY OCCURRING STEROID HORMONE PRODUCED IN THE ADRENAL GLANDS. IT ROUTINELY RISES IN CONCENTRATION IN THE EARLY HOURS OF THE MORNING AND PEAKS AT AROUND 7AM. IT'S A HIGHLY ADAPTIVE HORMONE THAT CAN BE INFLUENCED BY CHRONIC DISEASE, LIFESTYLE AND EXERCISE.

Higher levels of cortisol are produced during strenuous workouts. It is a good indicator of how hard your muscles have been working. In the short-term high cortisol levels due to training are a regular part of adaptation, and something you shouldn't be scared of. Without the adaptations cortisol assists with, your body isn't going to get fitter and stronger.

In addition to its role in making us fitter and stronger, cortisol's main function is to ensure proper immune function, regulate blood sugar levels, and aid in the metabolism of fat, protein and carbohydrates. It is essential to our survival, but, as with most things, too much can wreak havoc with your body.

WHAT CAUSES **HIGH CORTISOL?**

- Emotional stress (i.e. work deadlines);
- Physical stress (i.e. strenuous workouts, overtraining); and/or
- Sleep deprivation.

HOW DOES THE **STRESS RESPONSE OPERATE?**

1. You are faced with a stressor.
2. Your body produces a hormonal response and your adrenals secrete cortisol.
3. Your body goes into 'fight or flight' mode, with the cortisol causing glucose to be released as an immediate energy source for your large muscles.
4. Cortisol prevents the production of insulin to prevent it from being stored again, keeping it available for immediate use.
5. Cortisol affects the arteries, while epinephrine increases your heart rate, causing blood to pump harder and faster.
6. You address the situation causing you stress. Hormones then return to their regular level, unless the situation never is resolved, such as constant high-stress at work all day, stressors from family life in the evening and high-intensity training at night.

WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES **OF UNNATURALLY HIGH LEVELS OF CORTISOL?**

- Reduced protein synthesis, making it harder to build muscle tone;
- Low blood sugar;
- Fatigue;
- Low blood pressure;
- Immune system suppression;
- Thyroid disorders;
- Digestion and absorption issues;
- Poor training recovery;
- **INCREASED APPETITE, PARTICULARLY FOR HIGH-CALORIE FOODS; AND**
- Muscle and bone breakdown.

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PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

HOW CAN YOU REDUCE CORTISOL LEVELS?

- Reduce high-intensity training;
- Regular lower-intensity exercise;
- Get enough sleep; and/or
- Improved nutrition.

These simple nutrition changes are great to improve sleep and trump cortisol

GET ADEQUATE CALORIES

If you train hard and heavily restrict your calories you run the risk of increasing your cortisol output. Cortisol's role is to fuel the body when your blood sugar levels drop. This will occur during exercise, particularly if it's high-intensity. If you're starving, the body will need to create fuel from somewhere. Consequently, cortisol will be released and you will start breaking down the muscle you have been training so hard to build, as well as fat and glycogen. If you're looking to moderately lose weight, cut down your energy intake throughout the day and plan to have a snack just before you train to prevent cortisol surges.

KEEP UP THE CARBOHYDRATES

Cutting carbs is a surefire way to lose muscle and gain fat through cortisol surges. If you train regularly you need to eat enough carbs. If you don't, testosterone levels will drop while cortisol levels rise. Females produce a small amount of testosterone that provides the ability to lift heavy weights, gain muscle and have a healthy hormone balance. If hormones become imbalanced, the result is extreme fatigue and the inability or slowed progress of gaining lean muscle mass.

Slow-releasing (low-GI) carbs will stabilise blood sugars and prevent excessive cortisol production. Good carb choices include:

- Whole-grain bread;
- Whole-grain pasta;
- Quinoa;
- Sweet potato; and
- Rolled oats.

EAT STRESS-BUSTING FOODS

Chronically high levels of stress due to work deadlines, family life and financial pressures will affect your cortisol levels. You can beat this by including foods that give you a surge of dopamine and serotonin (feel-good hormones) in your diet. Both of these neurotransmitters work in the brain to make you feel happy, calm and relaxed.

Feel-good foods that can help to create dopamine and serotonin surges are:

- Dark chocolate;
- Warm oatmeal; and
- A glass of milk with cocoa.

EAT TO GET SLEEP

Sleep deprivation is a certain way to crank up your cortisol levels. Combat this by adding high-tryptophan items to your diet just before bed. Tryptophan is an amino acid (protein) that is used in the process of creating serotonin and melatonin (a hormone that helps you fall and stay asleep).

HIGH-TRYPTOPHAN FOODS INCLUDE

- Eggs;
- Spinach;
- Soy protein;
- Poultry (chicken or turkey);
- Seafood;
- Dairy products; and
- Bananas, which facilitate tryptophan intake.

ANTIOXIDANTS ALL THE WAY

Fruits and veggies contain a wide variety of antioxidants, powerful chemicals that neutralise free radicals. Free radicals are particles in the body that cause cells to age, and compromise the immune system. During times of stress, lack of sleep and overtraining, your immune system may become compromised and cortisol will cause an increase in free radicals. To neutralise free radicals and improve your health, add colourful fruits and vegetables such as:

- Blueberries
- Red kidney beans
- Cranberries
- Artichoke
- Blackberries
- Raspberries
- Apples
- Sweet potatoes
- Spinach
- Green tea

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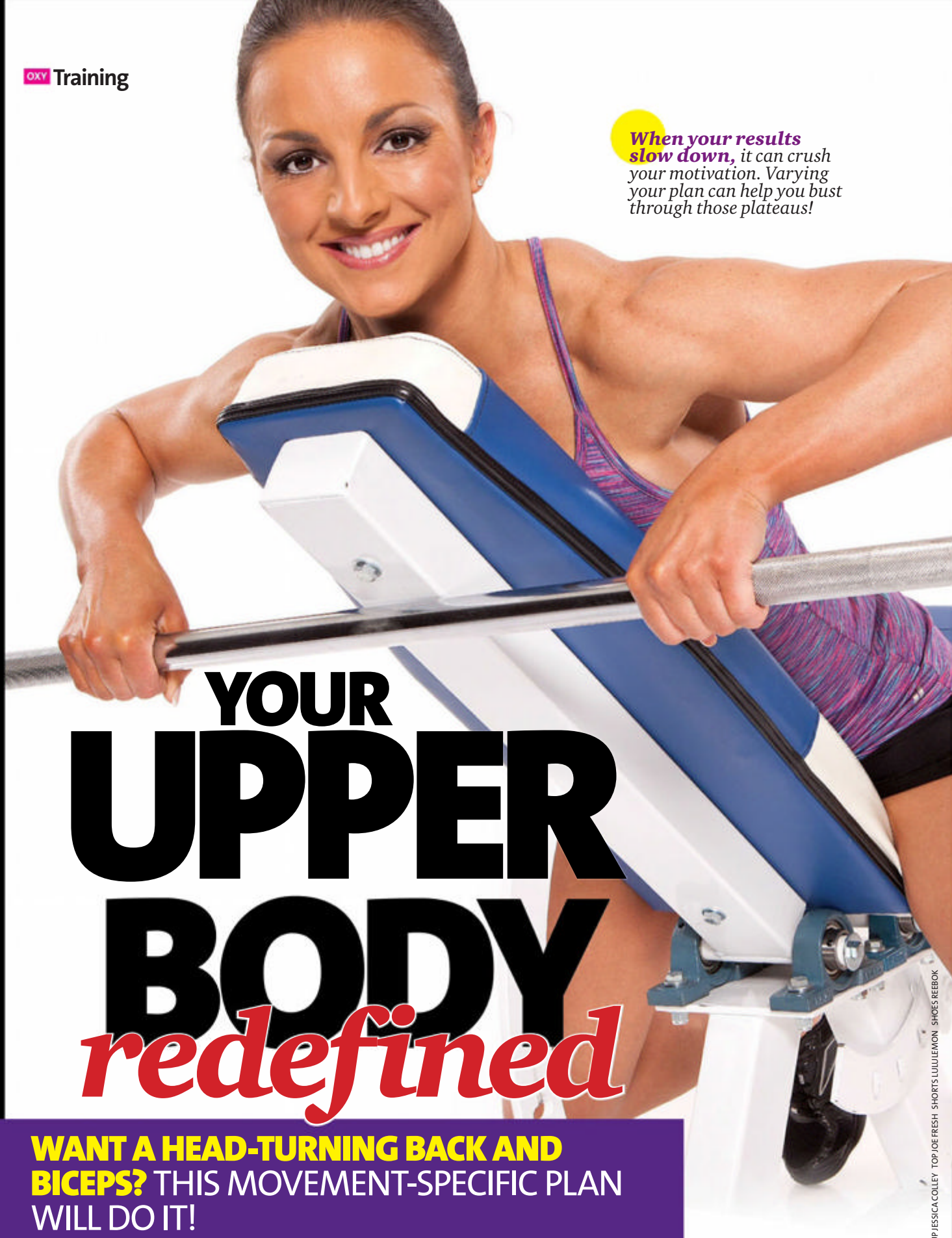

When your results slow down, *it can crush your motivation. Varying your plan can help you bust through those plateaus!*

YOUR UPPER BODY *redefined*

WANT A HEAD-TURNING BACK AND BICEPS? THIS MOVEMENT-SPECIFIC PLAN WILL DO IT!

BY **RACHEL CROCKER, FITNESS EDITOR** | PHOTOGRAPHY **GREGORY JAMES** | MODEL **NATALIE WAPLES**

HAIR & MAKEUP JESSICA COLLEY TOP JOE FRESH SHORTS LULULEMON SHOES REEBOK

THERE ARE THREE topics of discussion that are guaranteed to cause a heated debate: religion, politics and the right way to train.

While many hardcore lifters are dedicated to one fitness method, many seasoned trainers and competitors adhere to "periodisation," meaning they switch up their training variables to arouse new muscular growth. While this term is usually used in reference to overall goals – for example, training for six weeks with the purpose of increasing endurance, followed by six weeks of power training – weaving techniques in and out of your program will work equally well for keeping your muscles in peak form.

What you're holding is a starting point: a workout that is simple in design, but unique in that it targets your back and biceps – the pull muscles of your upper body. (Your abdominals are also another 'pull' group of muscles, so an option is to round out this routine with some crunches and planks.)

For the next month, do this pull workout twice per week on non-consecutive days, and pair it up with two push workouts (for your chest, triceps and delts) as well as lower-body work throughout the week. Try this routine on Mondays and Thursdays, an upper-body push workout on Tuesdays and Fridays, and a lower-body routine on Wednesdays and Saturdays for a well-rounded fitness agenda. After four weeks, revert back to straight sets or total-body routines for another period of time, and continue alternating.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

For your first upper-body pull routine of the week, aim for three to four sets of 10 to 12 reps per exercise, resting 30 to 45 seconds between sets. During your second weekly pull workout, increase the weight so that you can only get out eight reps of each exercise, reduce your amount of sets to two or three, and increase your rest to 60 to 120 seconds. Remember to work both sides evenly!

1 barbell hang clean

TARGET MUSCLES: TRAPEZIUS, ANTERIOR DELTOIDS, GLUTEUS MAXIMUS

Hold a barbell with an overhand grip and lower into a half-squat position. Explode up onto the balls of your feet as you row the bar up towards your neck, then quickly flip your wrists to point your elbows ahead of you, bringing the bar into a 'racked' position as you sink back into a squat. Straighten your legs to stand, then reverse to return to the start.

THE BAR SHOULD FOLLOW A STRAIGHT PATH FROM THE START OF EACH REP TO THE END.

TIP:
This is an advanced move; if you don't feel comfortable, perform an upright row instead.

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE.

TIP:
Lower the bar until your arms are nearly straight.

2 barbell preacher curl at bench

TARGET MUSCLES:
BRACHIORADIALIS, BICEPS BRACHII

Place your chest against a preacher curl bench and let your upper arms drape over the front. Grab a barbell with a shoulder-width grip, palms facing up, and curl the weight up until you feel it in the muscle.

TIP:
Wedge the unloaded end in a corner for stability.

3 single-arm barbell row

TARGET MUSCLES:
LATISSIMUS DORSI, RHOMBOIDS

Place a barbell with one end loaded on the ground. Stagger your legs, grab the bar near the weighted end with one hand and row it up, keeping the other end on the ground.

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WORK WITH WHAT YOU'VE GOT *Don't skip this workout because you don't have a barbell!*

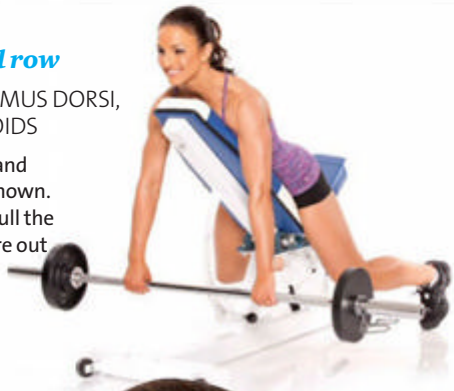
Each of these moves can easily be replicated with a set of dumbbells – just make sure you have two light and two heavier weights available.

4 *incline bench barbell row*

TARGET MUSCLES: LATISSIMUS DORSI, RHOMBOIDS, REAR DELTOIDS

Sit backwards on an incline bench and hold a barbell with a wide grip as shown. Retract your shoulder blades and pull the bar up, allowing your elbows to flare out to the sides.

TIP: *Set the bench to a 30-degree angle.*



TRY TO PINCH YOUR SHOULDER BLADES TOGETHER AT THE TOP OF THE MOVE.

TIP: *Don't round your spine forward.*

Weaving training techniques in and out of your program will help keep your muscles in peak form.

TIP: *Try this exercise with an unloaded bar first, as seen here.*

5 *seated bilateral concentration curl*

TARGET MUSCLES: BICEPS BRACHII, BRACHIALIS

Position yourself on the end of a flat bench and grab a light barbell with a narrow underhand grip. Lean forward and place your elbows on the insides of your knees. Extend your arms towards the floor, then bend your elbows to curl.

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6. *barbell reverse curl*

TARGET MUSCLES: BRACHIORADIALIS, BRACHIALIS

Hold a barbell with a shoulder-width overhand grip. Flex your arms to raise the bar towards your chest, then reverse.

TIP:
Anchor your upper arms tight to your sides!

IF YOU FEEL WRIST STRAIN TOWARDS THE END OF YOUR SET, REDUCE THE WEIGHT.

VARIETY IS THE SPICE OF LIFE

Apply it to your workouts!

Try alternating your biceps and back exercises, or doing all moves that target one muscle group in succession without rest (also called a triset).

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HOW TO BECOME A MORNING PERSON!

HIGH-FIVE *Your Day!*

Hit the gym instead of the snooze button to recharge your health.

BY JUDI KETTELER

More energy, more muscle, more time. Our guide to having it all.

MARCI GILBERT WAS TIRED of not being able to make dinner plans. She'd regularly rush from work to the gym, leaving no time for friends, or to enjoy a dinner with her husband. Her evening workouts seemed to take forever, and it was hard to stay motivated. "Plus, I was so tired of the evening heat, not to mention taking two showers every day," says Marci, 28, a marketing and development director. So Marci, whose exercise routine consisted of cardio/weight classes two days a week and running the other three days, made the switch to morning exercise. "It was so nice to be done exercising for the day by 7:30am I'd get to work and feel so ahead of the curve," she says.

AHEAD OF THE CURVE

There's a reason Marci felt mentally alert and good about herself after her morning exercise. When you accomplish something first thing, it not only starts your day off right, but your thinking is more clear. "There is research linking morning exercise with productivity among executives," says Denice Ferko-Adams, RD, LDN, director of the MacDonald Centre for Obesity Prevention and Education at Villanova University. It's also about time management. "First thing in the morning is the only time you know isn't going to be compromised by something else," says exercise physiologist Bryan Bergman, PhD, associate professor of medicine at the University of Colorado. That's huge for exercise adherence, he says. The vague notion of "not having time" is a major reason that people cite for giving up on exercise programs.

*"When I set a specific time to work out in the morning, it gives me a push to put my **fitness and health first, all day long.**"*

– BROOKE STACEY, FITNESS MODEL

WEIGHTS VS. CARDIO?

NOT SURE WHETHER YOU SHOULD HEAD FOR THE DUMBBELLS OR THE TREADMILL AT 6 AM? Science doesn't support one over the other, so do the one that you enjoy more, researchers say.

As far as physiology goes, there's no difference, but adherence – sticking with it over the long haul – is another matter, says exercise physiologist Bryan Bergman, PhD, associate professor of medicine at the University of Colorado. He sees the best results when people choose activities they enjoy, and then set a specific goal of completing a race or doing a competition (something you can register for ahead of time). That transforms morning from merely 'exercise time' into valuable 'training time' – a mental shift that can help you get over the initial hump and boost your whole day, if you choose to do it early on.

PHOTO PAUL BUCETA MODEL BROOKE STACEY

The great news is that morning is an equal opportunity time: any exercise you can do in the afternoon or evening, you can also do in the morning, provided you warm up and cool down just as you ordinarily would, Bergman says.

BENEFITS OF NOT HITTING SNOOZE

After a workout, you continue to burn calories, which means that front-loading your day is a good way to get your metabolism started on the right track. But more than measurable metabolic effects, morning exercise creates a distinct mindset that inspires you to live the *Oxygen* lifestyle. "Exercising first thing turns the lens to having a healthy day," says Lauren Slayton, RD, director of Foodtrainers, a New York City-based nutrition counseling centre that teaches people, including athletes, how to make healthier eating choices. You are more likely to eat healthy on days when you exercise first thing because you are already in the mindset. If you make the commitment to get up at 5:30am, you will be less likely to 'undo' all of that hard work with poor eating.

There may also be some more tangible physical benefits to hitting the gym in the morning. Research suggests that exercising within an hour of waking (the study participants exercised at 7am) produced better-quality sleep than working out in the afternoon or evening. A related study also showed that morning sweat sessions helped blood pressure dip during sleep better than afternoon or evening exercise. "Nocturnal dipping in blood pressure is one way we reset (lower) our normal operating pressures; if we do not experience a dip in blood pressure at night, we increase our risk for heart disease," says study author Scott Collier, PhD.

CHANGE YOUR SLEEP ROUTINE

Marci admits that her transition wasn't seamless. The first two days her alarm went off, she couldn't do it because anxiety about getting up had kept her up half the night. "Eventually, I just told myself: 'I will sleep and I will get up and do this,'" Marci says. After about a week, she was in the groove of 6am classes at the gym.

Forcing yourself to go to bed earlier is probably not going to work, says trainer Nicole Nichols, creator of the *SparkPeople: 28-Day Boot Camp* DVD, who successfully transitioned to morning exercise herself. "Let your body adjust naturally," she suggests. That first morning will

Calm Your Mind Before Bed

TRY THIS MEDITATION TECHNIQUE BEFORE CALLING IT A NIGHT:

- Find a quiet spot where you will be able to relax, such as your bedroom. Dim the lights if necessary.
- **Sit in a comfortable position on the floor (use a cushion or mat if needed).**
- If distracting thoughts enter your mind, acknowledge them, but gently let them go. Focus back on your breathing.
- **Perform this meditation for five to 10 minutes to start, and increase your time as you become more comfortable with it.**
- Focus on the rhythm of your breathing, counting each breath as you exhale. Count to 10, then repeat. Continue counting until you are relaxed.

TAKE DEEP BREATHS FROM YOUR BELLY, LETTING THEM OUT THROUGH YOUR NOSE.

PHOTO PAUL BUCETA MODEL MICHELLE MACDONALD GYM BAG GEOFFREY ROSS

be tough: forge ahead, because by night, you will be tired earlier. You'll go to bed 15 minutes earlier, and it will be 15 minutes' worth easier to get up, and so on. Within a week or so, if you let it, your body will have adjusted to the new schedule and you'll be going to bed earlier, naturally.

Additionally, skip the afternoon caffeine, Ferko-Adams suggests, and be careful of eating too heavy of an evening meal: both can interfere with sleep. But mostly, she says, just relax about it. Putting too much pressure on the idea that you must get to sleep earlier will only stress you out and make it ultimately more difficult to actually fall asleep. Take 15 to 20 minutes and meditate at night (see "Calm Your Mind Before Bed," pg. 56) to relax your body and get yourself in the right frame of mind for the next day. Once you're comfortable with it, meditate for up to 30 minutes at night.

PRELOAD YOUR DECISIONS

You can't just set a goal of morning exercise. You need action triggers: decisions you make ahead of time about the actions you will take in a specific situation. Peter Gollwitzer, PhD, professor of social-personality psychology at New York University, calls this "implementation intention"; Chip Heath and Dan Heath, authors of *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard* (Crown Business, 2010), call it "preloading the decision." You don't just make a decision to do something: you give yourself triggers to get it done – from your overall plan, "I will run the four-mile loop that starts on Locust Avenue," to all of the smaller cues, like, "When the alarm goes off, I will get up and put on my sports bra," and "When I walk into the kitchen and turn on the light, I will grab my water bottle." Research consistently shows that when people set specific intentions (visualize when and how they will perform a behavior), they commit to it more than when they just set a general goal.

Your preloading begins the night before. "Create as few steps as possible," Nichols says. Prepare your breakfast ahead of time (preworkout or post-workout, or both), pack your gym bag (keep a separate set of toiletries) and lay out your workout clothes in a visible area. If you're working out at home, have all the equipment (exercise ball, weights) ready to go, and the DVD loaded in the player. This way, when the alarm goes off early, you can rub the sleep out of your eyes, breathe deeply into those early-morning yawns, and get started on your fit day. You'll feel brighter, more alert, and more in shape before the rest of the world has even had their Starbucks.

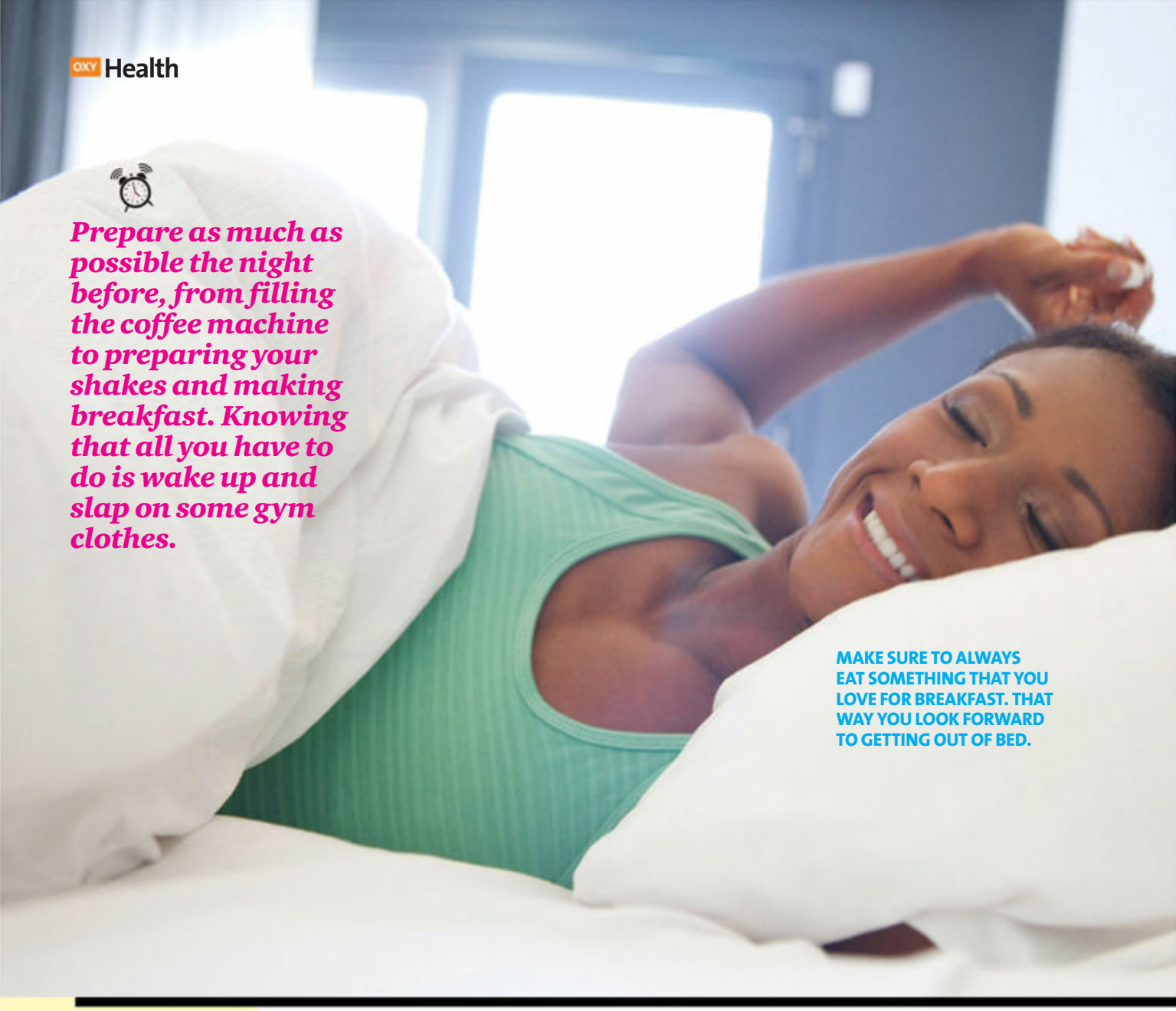
TRAIN ON EMPTY?

Wondering if you should eat before you head for the gym at 6am? The science is unclear, so we went to the experts for both sides of the argument.

No, says Denice Ferko-Adams, RD, LDN, director of the MacDonald Centre for Obesity Prevention and Education. "I've seen people double over from low blood sugar in the middle of those intense 45-minute morning boot-camp classes." **If you are doing an intense workout, it's good to eat something to prevent that jittery, low-blood-sugar feeling, and to absorb the gastric acids that have built up overnight, she says.** Plus, there are some studies that show that athletes train better/longer after having eaten breakfast. Before exercise, eat 100 to 200 calories that you can easily digest. Be sure to test small amounts of breakfast foods to see what works for you, she says.

Yes, says Lauren Slayton, RD, director of Foodtrainers. Actually, Slayton agrees that you should eat if you are doing intense exercise in the morning (more than an hour). "You can't run 10 kilometres on empty," she says. Athletes in training (such as triathletes) have different needs than regular exercisers. But for a 30-minute run, walk or session at the gym, you don't need to fuel up for performance's sake. The research conflicts a bit, she says, but you may be able to burn more fat on empty – but not at the expense of low blood sugar for longer-duration bouts. **Your best bet: eat as soon as possible once you're finished, so that you don't become ravenous and make bad food decisions.** A balance of complex carbs and protein is important after a workout for active women, she advises.

YOGHURT AND BANANA PETER CHOU OATS MAYA VISNYEI



Prepare as much as possible the night before, from filling the coffee machine to preparing your shakes and making breakfast. Knowing that all you have to do is wake up and slap on some gym clothes.

MAKE SURE TO ALWAYS EAT SOMETHING THAT YOU LOVE FOR BREAKFAST. THAT WAY YOU LOOK FORWARD TO GETTING OUT OF BED.

MOVES TO HELP YOU RISE AND SHINE

GET OUT OF BED, TURN ON THE LIGHT, AND GET MOVING RIGHT AWAY, SAYS PERSONAL TRAINER, NICOLE NICHOLS. HERE ARE SOME MOVES TO HELP YOU WAKE UP, WARM UP, AND GET OUT THE DOOR.

1. **WALL SQUATS** (IF YOU FEEL ADVANCED, BALANCE ON ONE LEG WHILE PUTTING ON SOCKS/SHOES).
2. **A FEW TRIPS UP AND DOWN THE STAIRS.**
3. **FROM STANDING, BEND FORWARD, THEN WALK OUT INTO A PLANK; PERFORM A PUSH-UP, THEN MOVE INTO DOWNWARD DOG, AND LOWER INTO CHILD'S POSE (A GREAT SERIES TO GET THE BLOOD FLOWING).**
4. **PUSH-UPS AGAINST THE DRESSER OR BED.**
5. **HIGH-KNEE MARCHES (MARCH YOURSELF RIGHT TO THE DOOR).**
6. **JUMPING JACKS.**

PHOTOS PAUL BUCETA MODELS TANJI JOHNSON (TOP), KIRSTY DUNNE (BOTTOM)

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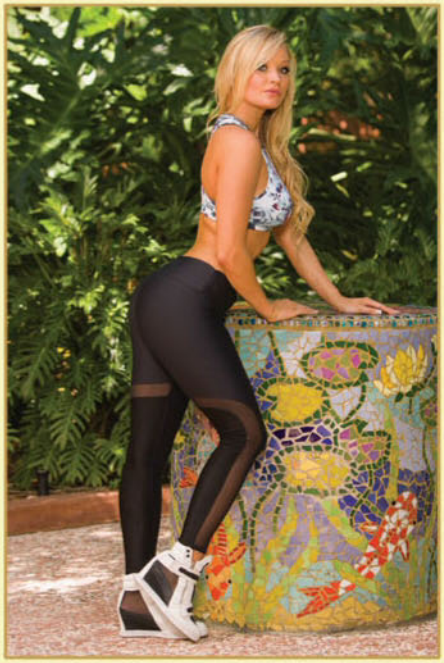

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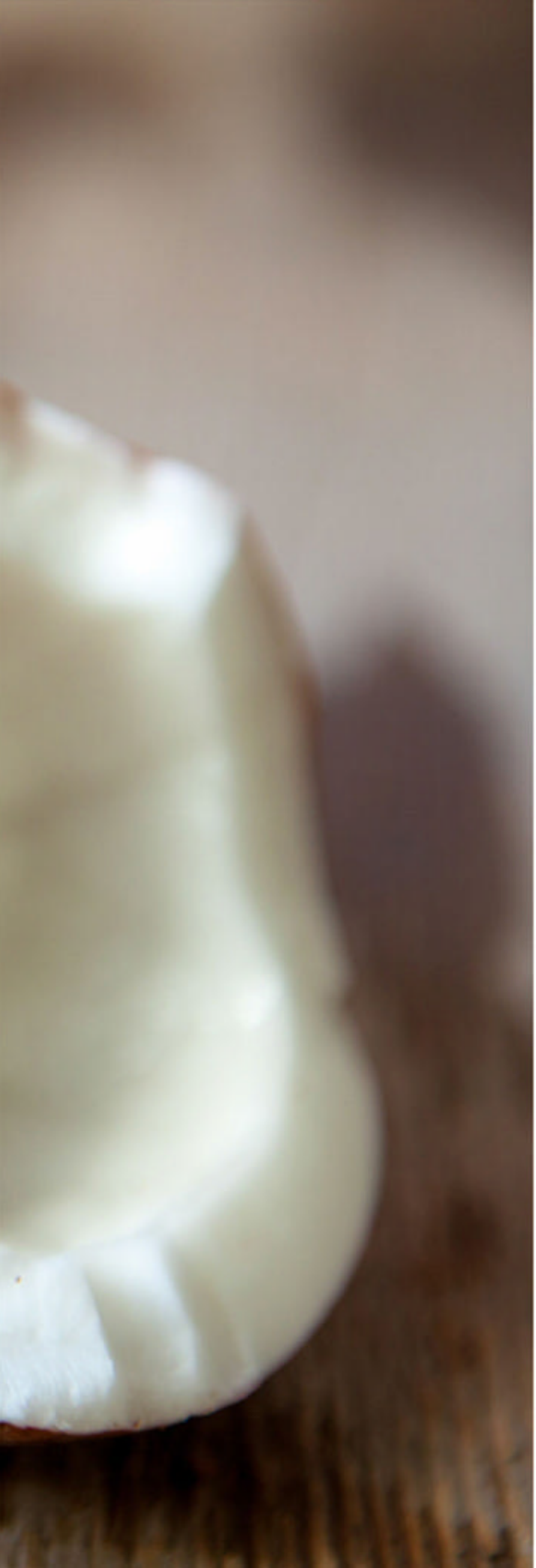
Crazy for COCONUT

IMAGES AND CONTENT PROVIDED BY **BRYNLEY KING**

The coconut oil craze is a prevailing phenomenon. Coconut is one of the most talked about foods on the market today. ***Everyone from nutritionists to chefs, bloggers and even doctors are raving about the advantages of incorporating the humble coconut into everyday life. And it's no secret why…***



TAKING THE 'EVERYTHING IN MODERATION' APPROACH TO HEALTH, COCONUT OIL IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE RECOGNISED FOR ITS INCREDIBLE HEALING AND RESTORATIVE HEALTH BENEFITS, LEADING PRACTITIONERS TO RECOMMEND INCLUDING AT LEAST ONE TABLESPOON OF COCONUT OIL INTO DAILY INTAKES TO REAP THE BENEFITS OF THE OIL.

While the saturated fat content in coconut oil is admittedly high (90 per cent to be exact), it is also a source of essential nutrients, which Pacific Island communities, such as my extended Banaban family, have reported as a contributing factor to good health for thousands of years. With benefits such as increased immunity, higher energy levels, stronger bones and a healthier digestive system, it's no wonder the coconut palm is referred to as 'The Tree Of Life'.

The oil is also an amazing ingredient for weight loss. A recent study revealed people who ate two tablespoons of coconut oil per day burned a considerably larger number of kilojoules compared to those who didn't. The reason? The properties in coconut oil are ideal for boosting the metabolism, helping to increase energy expenditure and burn calories more efficiently.

In addition, coconut oil works wonders for controlling calorie intake by making you feel fuller for longer AND reducing sugar cravings, which means no sneaky snacks throughout the day or midnight munchies.

Full of medium chain triglycerides, the oil is anti-viral, anti-fungal and anti-inflammatory, meaning it's just as good for your outsides as it is for your insides (try it as a moisturiser and you'll see what I mean). Unlike other oils such as olive oil, coconut oil also doesn't lose its composition when heated which means no matter how hot it gets it will never lose its nutritional benefits.

My best advice when purchasing coconut oil is to look for a brand that is cold-pressed, extra-virgin and from a company with good ethics. Organic certification doesn't go astray either as you can be assured that every drop of oil you buy can be traced back to the farm on which it was grown, the plant it was processed at, right down to the bottling procedure. Don't be afraid to ask questions and do your own research.

Don't think you can stomach a tablespoon of oil straight? These simple recipes are the perfect way to incorporate the good oil into your lifestyle (plus enjoy other natural coconut products) and will ensure you get your daily dose to really reap the multiple health benefits.

Bon coconut!

BRYN'S CARAMEL ALMOST KIT KAT SLICE

Whoever thought a homemade chocolate bar could taste so good? This tantalising treat will have everyone in awe of your perfect kitchen creation.

GLUTEN-FREE | PALEO | VEGAN | RAW | DAIRY-FREE

Serves 16 Slices

Nutty Base Ingredients

- ½ cup almond meal
- ½ cup walnuts
- 3 tbsp coconut nectar syrup or rice malt syrup
- ¼ cup raw cacao powder

Crunch Layer Ingredients

- 1 cup almond meal
- ½ cup coconut flour
- ½ cup desiccated coconut
- 2 tbsp coconut nectar syrup or rice malt syrup
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Gooey Caramel Layer Ingredients

- 3 cups dates, pitted
- 2 tbsp coconut milk
- 2 tbsp coconut butter
- 1/3 cup coconut oil

Chocolate Drizzle Topping Ingredients

- 1/3 cup coconut oil, melted
- ¼ cup raw cacao powder
- ¼ cup coconut nectar syrup or rice malt syrup

Directions

1. Line a square or rectangle baking tray with baking paper. (Try not to use a very large baking tray, as you want your slice to be plump.)
2. Grab all of your nutty base ingredients, place into a food processor and blend.
3. Place the base ingredients in the tray and firmly press down the mixture. Place the tray in the freezer while you work on your next layer.
4. Place all of the crunch ingredients into the food processor and blend.
5. Place the crunch mixture in the tray and press down firmly. Place the tray in the freezer while you work on your next layer.
6. Now the best bit – the caramel layer! Place all ingredients in your food processor and blend. If your dates are sticking to the sides, simply scrape the sides and keep blending.
7. Pour the caramel mixture into the tray and even out the mixture (a spatula is best for this part). Place the tray in the freezer while you work on your next layer.
8. Finally the chocolate layer! In a mixing bowl, mix all ingredients together until you have a smooth consistency. Pour over the slice and freeze overnight or for at least 4 hours.

Tip – When cutting your slice use a warm sharp knife to ensure your slice cuts clean.

BRYN'S COCONUT CURRY

My Banaban stepfather, Ken, taught me this recipe when I was seven years old and it is still a major staple once a week in my home. My good friends all know if there's one thing I can make it's a curry!

GLUTEN-FREE | DAIRY-FREE | PALEO OPTION

Serves 8 – Great to save in the freezer for lazy day meals!

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp extra virgin coconut oil
- 2 brown onions, diced
- 3 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 large chilli, chopped
- 3 tbsp curry powder (seriously amazing!)
- 4 cubes of homemade chicken or vegetable stock
- pinch salt
- pinch pepper
- 800g diced meat – chicken, lamb or fish (my favourite is chicken!)
- 5 regular potatoes, peeled and diced
- 5 regular carrots, peeled and diced
- 1 cup organic coconut cream
- 1 1/2L water

Directions

1. Over medium temperature, heat coconut oil in a large saucepan or pot.
2. Add diced onion, minced garlic, salt and pepper, and stir until brown.
3. Add in curry powder, chilli and chicken stock. Reduce to a low temperature.
4. Allow the flavours to develop for around 5 minutes.
5. Add water and bring to the boil.
6. Add potatoes, carrot and simmer for 10-15 minutes.
7. Add in meat (adding the meat at the end will ensure tender pieces) and coconut cream and simmer for a further 20 minutes.
8. Serve as is in a bowl or on a bed of fresh steamed rice.

Tip – For a Paleo option, replace potatoes and rice with cauliflower.

MACADAMIA & COCONUT MUESLI

Wake up every day to this incredible healthy muesli! Not only does it taste delicious for breakfast, it is also a great snack.

GLUTEN-FREE | PALEO OPTION | VEGAN | DAIRY-FREE

Serves 6

Ingredients

- ¾ cup gluten-free rolled oats
- 2 tbsp virgin coconut oil
- 2 tbsp pepitas
- ½ cup unsalted macadamias
- 2 tbsp organic coconut nectar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ cup organic toasted chips

Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 160°C.
2. Combine oats and coconut oil in a bowl, spread evenly over a large baking tray.
3. Bake for 10 minutes or until brown then remove from the oven.
4. Return oats to a mixing bowl, add macadamias, pepitas, nectar syrup and cinnamon until the mixture is thoroughly coated.
5. Return to the oven for a further 15 minutes to roast, stirring occasionally if needed.
6. Once finished baking allow to cool, then add toasted chips. Seal in a jar or airtight container.
7. Serve with fresh coconut yoghurt and strawberries. Enjoy!

Tip – For a Paleo option use almonds or sunflower seeds instead of oats.

STICKY DATE PUDDING

Love sticky date pudding but hate all the nasty ingredients that can be added? Why not try creating your own healthy masterpiece at home with this saucy creation.

GLUTEN-FREE | PALEO

Serves 8

Pudding Ingredients

- 1 cup dates, pitted
- 1 tsp bicarbonate soda
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 1/3 cup almond meal
- ½ cup coconut sugar
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup of ghee or coconut oil

Caramel Sauce Ingredients

- 1 cup coconut sugar
- 1 cup coconut cream
- ½ cup ghee or coconut oil
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Pudding Method

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C.
2. Line a circle or square baking tray with baking paper or for muffins, grease a 12-cup muffin tin.
3. Place dates and half the bicarbonate soda in a mixing bowl and add boiling water. Allow to stand for 30-40 minutes.
4. Using a food processor or electric mixer, beat the coconut sugar and ghee or coconut oil together first. Then add the eggs and continue to beat for a minute or so. After, add in the almond meal and dates until well combined.
5. Add the mixture into the baking tray and place in the oven for 40 to 45 minutes.
6. Once out of the oven place pudding onto wire rack to allow cooling.

Caramel Sauce Method

1. While the pudding is baking, combine coconut sugar, cream and ghee or coconut oil in a saucepan over a low heat. Remember to stir occasionally until boiled. Once boiled, remove from heat and continue to stir until fully combined.

Tip – Serve caramel sauce warm over pudding and top with a rich coconut ice cream or whipped coconut whipped. Enjoy!

STRAWBERRY COCONUT ICE CREAM

One of the most rewarding things I do in my kitchen is make my own homemade ice cream. Not only is it so simple to create but also tastes divine. Best of all, this recipe can be changed to so many different flavours.

RAW| VEGAN| PALEO | DAIRY-FREE | GLUTEN-FREE
Serves 4

Ingredients

- 2 cans organic coconut milk, chilled in the freezer for 15 minutes
- 2 cups fresh strawberries
- ¼ cup coconut nectar syrup

Directions

1. Add all ingredients in your blender and blend until smooth.
2. Place the mixture into a container and in the freezer overnight so it becomes solid.
3. Depending on your freezer, let sit for 5 minutes before scooping into a bowl and enjoy!

Tip – It is very important to place the cans in the freezer first for 15 minutes so the fat from the coconut milk will be at the top of the can and the milk will be at the bottom. You need only to use the top part of the coconut milk. Freeze remaining milk in ice cube trays to use in your smoothies later so there is no waste.

Get Creative! **The following other ingredients can be used in this recipe to change the flavour.**

- 2 cups peaches
- 2 cups blueberries
- 2 cups pineapple
- 2 cups mango

BRYNLEY KING

No one knows the benefits of coconuts more so than Australia's very own 'coconut guru' Brynley King – author of cookbook Going Coconuts that is based on the fundamental principles of eating clean and living green – the healthier experience using Banaban Extra Virgin Coconut Oil.

Brynley has spent her life travelling the world with her mother and Banaban stepfather, visiting myriad coconut plantations throughout Asia and the Pacific and learning first-hand about coconut products; how this simple fruit was used hundreds of years ago by her extended Banaban family, and can be incorporated into life today in the western world.

A self-confessed coconut addict, her travels have also seen her visit international and government-funded coconut research centres, world food exhibitions and assist in Rabi Island based aid projects, sharing knowledge on the benefits coconuts can have on our lives. Brynley is now on her way to becoming an unstoppable force in the cooking, beauty and health industries. For more information, visit www.goingcoconuts.com.au

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POWER V FORCE

BY **GEOFF EDWARDS**

DO YOU EVER FEEL THAT LIFE IS LIKE AN UPHILL BATTLE? DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE EXPENDING CONTINUOUS ENERGY IN COUNTLESS AREAS OF YOUR LIFE, INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS, WORK, FRIENDS, BUSINESS AND FINANCES? DOES IT FEEL LIKE YOU'RE ALWAYS FORCING OUTCOMES? HOW WOULD YOU FEEL BEING ALIGNED, TOTALLY FOCUSSED AND IN THE FLOW THROUGH YOUR OWN TRUE POWER? Balancing every aspect of your life is crucial for positive flow to occur; spiritual, mental, emotional and physical alignment must be in place. This means getting out of the 'busy-ness' of life and focusing on what isn't serving you well, moving into the flow, shifting the thoughts of lack of self-worth that are holding you back, and connecting to the value you provide. This is true power! This article will help you develop your own power naturally rather than wasting your energy.

"Be like water making its way through cracks. Do not be assertive, but adjust to the object, and you shall find a way around or through it. If nothing within you stays rigid, outward things will disclose themselves."

– Bruce Lee

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MESSAGES IN LIFE

Life is very busy, but do you ever STOP to smell the roses, reflect on a sunset or savour an acknowledgment for a job well done? In society there is a general feeling that the busier you are the more productive you are. Throw in all of the messages that bombard us daily, and it results in minimal space in our lives for reflection and insights. Do you really 'hear' the right messages about your journey, from your partner or from work?

Understanding your own personal power comes from awareness of these messages, how you feel on a daily basis and what is impacting this power. It is important to then find the root cause of any unproductive energy or where you may be forcing situations. You can do this by noticing a number of things:

- What proportion of the time are you running at less than desired power?
- What situations are drawing on your power?
- What are your habits, fears and beliefs?
- What thinking are you engaging in?
- How successful were you at turning this situation around?
- What are your overall patterns of behaviour?

Consider how much time every day you spend on these energy-draining or forced situations and what this would add up to over a week, a year, and then, say, 10 years. If it is one hour per day, this equates to approximately five months over 10 years you could spend enjoying your life.

VALUING YOU

If you want to claim inner power in your life, you need to accept yourself as you are; you need to hold yourself up over all of the things this world throws at you. You have no requirement to prove your worth and value to anyone. Let's face it, most people are not aware of the incredible power they possess. You need to declare who you are and what you value, and then commit to living that out everyday in every situation. That is our inner core – our centre – that cannot be compromised. Once you have that, you will know how to respond in any situation. So don't miss out on the opportunity to work on your internal power.

How do you feel about yourself? Have you ever asked, "Am I worth it?" Your concept of yourself determines the level of success you'll be able to achieve and self-esteem affects everything you are, have and do. It governs your every action and reaction. So if deep down you don't have confidence in yourself or your mind is always churning with limitations and fears, you won't recognise great opportunities right in front of you. Even if you do, it's unlikely you'd pursue them the way a confident person would. Your innermost beliefs lead to your thoughts, feelings, actions and results. When you know you're truly worth it, you won't settle for anything less. Having simple approaches on a consistent basis that relate your true worth will ensure you become your own No.1 fan.

TOTAL ALIGNMENT

Know that true beauty comes from the inside. You might say this is a cliché, but it is a true cliché. When you are pleased with yourself on the inside it will show on the outside. You can have all the qualities for outer beauty, but if you don't feel beautiful on the inside it will negatively affect your external appearance. Many people spend a fortune and a lot of time to fix their exterior when what really makes one successful is the inner beauty. When your inside is beautiful, your outer presence will shine. Remember, ***"Outer beauty is inner confidence."***

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE

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Tips for Your Power:

- Consider where you expend energy in your life.
- Note where repeated 'messages' show up.
- Notice when true power has occurred for you.
- Spend time discovering your true worth.
- Develop your own life plan.
- Ensure alignment between inner and outer.
- Gain an objective view from a coach.

BRING ON THE POWER

After you have done some work on building your own personal power, there may be some areas where you find it difficult to free your mind from obstacles. So remember that it's all a state of mind and changing your mind can be done very quickly. The way you see the world is based on our mental images, sounds and feelings. By shrinking the ones you don't want and expanding the ones you do want, you can create amazing changes.

Pay attention to what images you make when you are stressed and make them smaller, move them far away and make them fuzzy and dim. Replace them with more relaxing images and make the new images big, bright, colourful and vivid. Change the tone of your inner voice and make it ridiculous, so that instead of it sounding stressed, make it sound like Mickey Mouse, or make it a deep seductive tone. Use the laughter filter to frame every stressful situation in a humorous way. What you are really doing is changing your mental CD. Also, by knowing your internal communications, your rules, references, beliefs, perceptions and associations, you can create a change model you can use in an instant for yourself. With the addition of anchoring and reframing, you can re-create that change and develop new models for sustainable success. By knowing yourself you can then work with others to create outcomes that are beneficial overall.

In working with a client recently I was able to change an upsetting situation into one of certainty. The way this worked was to take an image of the upsetting situation and replace it with the ideal image. It worked very well in the first one or two sessions and now this client is untroubled by the situation and the relationship has completely changed with the other person, by her (the client) being totally appreciated.

Overall, it is important to take note of how you feel daily and whether you are totally driven or distracted, and to note what distracts you. Also, what are your beliefs, attitudes and behaviours when you are feeling distracted? Knowing patterns of behaviour and how you operate daily leads you to new awareness and growth. Studying and practising the habits of successful and driven individuals creates the right mindset for success. Arranging a support network on your journey to success can also increase your drive and motivation.

If you would like to accelerate your approach to total power, contact me via geoffedwards@bigpond.com.

Geoff Edwards is an internationally accredited Life Coach with over 25 years of coaching experience who can support you on your journey to success with lasting results. For more information, visit **www.geoffedwards.net**

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FAT-BLASTING BOOTCAMP

BY **LINDA MELONE** | PHOTOGRAPHY BY **DALLAS OLSEN** | MODEL: **SHANNAH BAKER** | HAIR & MAKE-UP BY **LISA LEE**

MELT FAT, GET TONED AND BOOST ENERGY IN JUST 14 MINUTES WITH *OXYGEN*'S EXCLUSIVE SIX-MOVE CIRCUIT – AND FORGET ABOUT BEING HUMILIATED BY SOME WANNABE BOOTCAMP DRILL SERGEANT BARKING OUT ORDERS.

There's good reason why bootcamp routines have been successful over the years: few workouts top the fat-burning potential of bootcamp routines.

After checking out a number of routines, *Oxygen* created this unique bootcamp-style workout to give you a no-frills muscle- and strength-building fat blast done in a circuit fashion. Most bootcamp routines intersperse cardio periods within each circuit, but instead, we've decided to eliminate that particular aspect. *Oxygen*'s workout is a weight-based circuit that produces nearly all the benefits of a standard bootcamp, minus the trainer barking out commands.

But don't be fooled by our omission: the structure of the workout and movements you'll use will pump up your cardiovascular system into the fat-torching arena.

The additional benefit of *Oxygen*'s bootcamp workout is that, thanks to our unique mix of high-intensity movements, you'll continue to burn calories for quite some time after you've completed the workout. This process, known as 'excess post-exercise oxygen consumption' or EPOC, refers to the additional calories your body burns as it returns to its pre-exercise state. That's good news when your goal is to melt fat while putting on muscle and building strength and cardio endurance.

Use this routine to supplement your usual two to three days of weight training per week, but to avoid over-training syndrome don't do both your weight training and this bootcamp workout on the same days.

Shannah Baker

From the coastal town of Mandurah, Western Australia, where Shannah grew up with her grandmother, she made her way to the Gold Coast at 18 years young looking for a new adventure. Shannah fell in love with it, met her husband and has now been on the east coast for five years! From basketball to horse riding, riding motorbikes to lifting weights, Shannah has always tried to live an active lifestyle but early this year found her true calling when she decided to dedicate her time to become a fitness competitor.

Shannah has found her passion and hopes to continue in the industry and help others along the way.

OXYGEN'S 14-MINUTE BOOTCAMP
»FAT BLAST

ACTION	INTERVAL
Warm-up	5 minutes minimum
1. Plank push-up with rotation	60 seconds
2. Prisoner squat	60 seconds
3. Medicine ball crunch on stability ball	60 seconds
Rest	60 seconds (longer or shorter, as desired)
4. Alternating front lunge	60 seconds
5. Alternating dumbbell chest press	60 seconds
6. Oblique crunch on stability ball	60 seconds (30 seconds per side)
Rest (if doing a second circuit, skip the warm-up) If not, proceed to the cool-down	60 seconds (longer or shorter, as desired)
Cool-down	2 minutes: stationary bike, treadmill or walk

1. PLANK PUSH-UP WITH ROTATION

TARGET MUSCLES: obliques, pectoralis major, triceps brachii, deltoids

SET-UP: Using your own body weight or while holding on to light weights to start, position yourself in a push-up position, hands (dumbbells) in line directly under your shoulders, with your feet spread slightly for stability **[A]**.

ACTION: Keeping your back straight and abdominals tight, lower your body toward the floor just short of touching it **[B]**., and then push back up until your arms are straight. Then, in the up or extended position, rotate your upper body and rotate your free arm (or dumbbell) toward the ceiling and turn your head to look up toward your hand **[C]**. Return to the starting position and repeat, rotating to the opposite side. Do as many reps as possible for one minute.

TOP TIP

With this exercise, keep your back locked into position at all times; avoid arching or piking your hips.

2. PRISONER SQUAT

TARGET MUSCLES: quadriceps, glutes

SET-UP: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart and your toes and knees pointing straight ahead. Bring your elbows out to the sides as you place your hands lightly behind your head. Keep your abdominals braced and your back straight **[A]**.

ACTION: Bending at your hips and knees and while maintaining good posture, lower yourself into a squat position until your thighs are parallel to the ground **[B]**; pause and slowly return to the starting position. Repeat as necessary for one minute.

TOP TIP

Keep your toes and knees pointing forward and your back straight at all times.

3. MEDICINE BALL CRUNCH ON A STABILITY BALL

TARGET MUSCLES: rectus abdominis

SET-UP: Holding onto a light medicine ball (or dumbbell), sit on top of a stability ball, knees bent and toes pointed straight ahead. Next, slowly walk out, rolling down on the ball until it supports your lower and mid back **[A]**.

ACTION: Keeping your abdominals pulled in, raise your chest up toward the ceiling as you lift your shoulders up off the stability ball (push the medicine ball or dumbbell toward the ceiling) **[B]**. Contract your abdominals at the top, and then slowly return to the starting position and repeat for one minute.

TOP TIP

Keep the movement slow and controlled, squeezing your abs at the top.

4. ALTERNATING FRONT LUNGE

TARGET MUSCLES: glutes, quadriceps

SET-UP: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, abdominals pulled in and hands on your hips or down at your sides holding on to light weights with your palms facing inward.

ACTION: Keep your eyes facing forward and back straight as you step forward into a lunge, bending both knees. The upper thigh of your leading leg should be parallel to the floor, while the knee of your training leg should come near the floor but not touch it **[A]**. Then, in one motion, push through your leading thigh, returning to the starting position. Repeat with the opposite leg. Continue alternating legs for one minute.

TOP TIP

Keep your torso upright and, to protect your knee joint, do not allow the knee of the leading leg to move beyond the plane of your toes when you lunge forward.

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE

SHANNAH BAKER'S **TOP TIPS**

1. Try supersetting your workouts (do each exercise straight after the other).
2. Perform high reps with medium weight – not too heavy.
3. Keep your heart rate up for maximum fat burn.

5. ALTERNATING DUMBBELL CHEST PRESS

TARGET MUSCLES: pectoralis major, anterior deltoids, triceps brachii

SET-UP: Sit on a stability ball, grasp light weights and spread your feet apart enough for balance. Next, roll down on the ball until your head and shoulders are supported by it and your knees are bent 90 degrees, arms extended above **[A]**. Make sure that your palms point in the direction of your feet and that your wrists are positioned directly above your shoulders.

ACTION: Contract your abs and, keeping one arm in position, drive your other arm toward the ceiling, ending just above your chest nearest your working arm **[B]**. Return your extended arm to the starting position, lock it in place, and repeat the upward motion with the opposite arm. Return to the starting position, completing one repetition. Continue for one minute.

TOP TIP

Keep your movements slow and controlled; do not allow your back to sag (keep it tight).

6. OBLIQUE CRUNCH ON A STABILITY BALL

TARGET MUSCLES: obliques

SET-UP: Lie sideways on a stability ball, positioning your right hip against it. Cross your arms in front of your chest (for stability, anchor your feet against a wall or other stationary object if necessary). Lock your body so that it maintains a straight line **[A]**.

ACTION: Keeping your head locked in position, slowly bend at your waist, raising your upper body off the ball **[B]**. Stop, then slowly return to the starting position. Do one side for 30 seconds, then do the opposite side for another 30 seconds.

TOP TIP

Don't rush or bounce; maintain quality of performance over speed of execution.

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GET SOME 'GRIT', GIRL

Forget the 'beauty versus brains' argument when talking about what determines success, because it turns out neither is right! All these years we have been fighting over which one is more likely to get you places, all the while people of vastly different looks and levels of intelligence have been successfully following their dreams and kicking goals. And now we know how. Recent research shows the single most accurate predictor of success in life is neither beauty nor brains. It's 'grit'.[1]

BY **HARRIET WALKER**

"You may not be the best right now, but you will never be the best if you quit."

LET'S START FROM THE BEGINNING: GROWING UP WE WERE USUALLY TOLD THAT IF WE GOT GOOD GRADES WE WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL IN LIFE. Too bad if maths wasn't your forte or if science made you squirm. If you didn't get it then you had better sign yourself up for an average life. Sound familiar?

Well, what if your school grades were only a drop in the ocean of the potential you hold as an individual? The Intelligence Quotient (IQ) is often used as a measure of intellectual aptitude, and while IQ may indicate how quickly someone is able to learn and apply knowledge, it does a very poor job at predicting the long-term success. This is because academic ability is only one part of the equation that calculates success.

It turns out that IQ is nothing without perseverance and dedication to long-term goals; the personality trait known as 'grit'. The presence of the 'grit' personality trait amongst groups as diverse as students at top universities in America, military cadets and even young kids in spelling bees positively predicted success in life.[1] After 10 years of interviewing some of the most successful people in the world, including Bill Gates, four Nobel Prize winners, race car drivers and artists, writer and researcher Richard St John determined the eight traits most common amongst these high achievers: passion, work, focus, consistent personal development, giving to others, new ideas and persistence and drive.[3] It was once thought that when it came to brains, you got what you were given, and intelligence and capacity to learn were fixed. Modern research now shows us that the brain can be trained to be better – you just have to do the work.[2]

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

It sounds pretty simple, but you really are only as intelligent as you let yourself be. This means that the only thing that's really getting in your way of that win is your belief in your ability to get there. This is what has been termed as the 'growth' mindset. Put simply, the greatest predictor of success is dedication and hard work, not genetic ability or luck. It's also knowing that failure isn't permanent and embracing it is a necessary part of learning and personal development.

SO HOW DOES YOUR THOUGHT PATTERN TURN INTO A MINDSET FOR SUCCESS?

Think of a thought as a trickle of water running down a rock. If it happens just once you will never see that drop again, but if more and more water follows the path of that first drop, in time, the flow will carve a new pathway for the water. The same goes for thoughts about reaching your goals. If you are clear on the new direction you want to take, make up some positive affirmations to repeat.

Visualise yourself being successful. Take these first steps to making those dreams a reality.

It's important to remember that it's not only thoughts and mindset that will help you reach your goals – that's just the first part. Planning, action, consistency, time and determination need to be combined with your new growth mindset to guarantee success. What's also important is surrounding yourself with people of a similar attitude who truly want to see you succeed – your team. These sorts of changes won't happen in a day but are part of the whole process of developing your grit and growth mind.

Once you get started, it's exciting to think of all the things you could achieve simply by practising the growth mindset. If you tell yourself you can't and resign yourself to average, then you won't get anywhere near your potential. By swapping your 'stuck' mindset for a 'growth' one, you're halfway there already! So what are you waiting for? Write down those goals, make a plan and go for growth!

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

SEVEN WAYS TO CREATE A GROWTH MINDSET

1. **INVITE CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM INTO YOUR LIFE.** Feedback can be a bitter pill to swallow at times, but when you start looking at it as a chance to get better, failure goes from being devastating to being a learning experience.

2. **STOP BELIEVING IN LUCK AND START CREATING OPPORTUNITIES.** You may not know where to start on your goals list but with the wealth of information available on the Internet, a few hours of research can give you some ideas on who you can talk to and where you need to be.

3. **AVOID COMPARING YOURSELF TO THOSE AROUND YOU AND RUN YOUR OWN RACE.** Everyone is on their own unique journey and you don't know where they have been, so there is no use in comparing yourself. Do 'you' and do it well, then there will be no need for jealousy or envy.

4. **WRITE DOWN YOUR GOALS AND BREAK THEM DOWN.** You can start with your five-year goals, then your one-year goals, your six-month goals and your one-month goals. Be as specific as you can; set timeframes and identify what barriers might appear on the way so you can figure out the best way to tackle them.

5. **LOSE THE BELIEF THAT YOU ARE NOT SMART ENOUGH!** You can do whatever you put your mind to, you just have to commit and plan out how to go about doing it. The growth mindset is believing in your ability to learn.

6. **DO WHAT YOU LOVE AND DO IT WITH PASSION.** It may not be your full-time job but that doesn't mean you can't make whatever your 'thing' is a big part of your life. Grit is all about being passionate about your goal enough that you keep going even if you fall short a few times.

7. **TALENT ISN'T EVERYTHING.** Sure, it may give you a head start, but hard work is required to make sure that talent doesn't go to waste. You may not be the best right now, but you will never be the best if you quit.

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PLAY, Explore, Connect!

BY **PAIGE GREENFIELD**

STEP OUTSIDE OF THE GYM TO RE-IGNITE YOUR PASSION FOR FITNESS, IMPROVE YOUR EXERCISE PERFORMANCE AND AMPLIFY YOUR HEALTH. **HERE'S HOW SWITCHING TO 'GREEN WORKOUTS' CAN REVITALISE YOUR LIFE.**

With the beautiful summer weather well upon us, it's time to trade the treadmill for the trails, swap fluorescents for the sun, and ditch stale playlists for the sounds of rustling leaves and dirt beneath your feet.

Bend the rules. *Swap the gym for some fresh air.*

Research shows that spending more time outdoors may truly be the secret to a stronger, healthier body, and a calmer, happier mind. "For many years, humans were sustained by nature – it fed us and sheltered us," says Alan Logan, co-author of *Your Brain on Nature: The Science of Nature's Influence on Your Health, Happiness, and Vitality* (Wiley, 2012). "We have an innate and emotional attraction to it." So it's no surprise that spending more time outdoors is associated with an overwhelming amount of health benefits, including lower blood pressure, reduced levels of the stress hormone cortisol, improved immunity and a longer life. A walk in the park can even boost your self-esteem, reports a 2012 study published in the journal *Perspectives in Public Health*.

And taking your sweat sessions outdoors can fire up your gains even more. "Green exercise is like exercise squared," says Logan. "We know that exercise is good for us and that being outside is good for us, but when combined, their benefits are even greater."

In a study of more than eight hundred adults, researchers found that exercising in natural environments resulted in greater increases in energy and rejuvenation, as well as decreased tension, anger and depression compared to exercising indoors, reports the journal *Environmental Science & Technology*. What's more, regularly working out outdoors may increase the likelihood that you'll stick with your training program. "When you exercise outdoors, you enjoy it more, so you're more likely to do it again," explains Eva Selhub, GP, co-author of *Your Brain on Nature*. So lace up your running shoes for fitter habits and a lifetime of good health.

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE.

UNPLUG

One of the many reasons outdoor workouts are so good for you is because they draw you away from the stressors and distractions of daily life. In fact, experts have attributed many of today's mental and physical health epidemics, such as depression and obesity, to nature deprivation syndrome, says Eva Selhub, GP, co-author of *Your Brain on Nature* (Wiley, 2012). "It's the idea that changes in technology, increased screen time, and a fast-paced 'get-it-done-now' world keep us away from spending time in nature, which has real health and emotional consequences," explains Selhub. So to get the most out of your outdoor workouts, leave your gadgets at home and unplug as much as possible when you step outside.

You may want to keep your smartphone with you for safety, but put it in airplane mode so you're not tempted to check your email or texts. "If the thought of exercising without music makes you less likely to do it, then try to make just some of your workout technology-free," recommends Stacy Berman, owner of Stacy's Bootcamp, an outdoor fitness program. "You may be amazed at how great a workout feels when it's just you and your surroundings."

Get creative. *Training outdoors inspires you to play as you sweat.*

Think like a kid

Remember recess? *During childhood, it was always the best part of the day – a chance to get outside and run around.*

That's exactly what getting outside inspires us to do even now. "You're more likely to be active the moment you step outdoors than when you're inside being lured by the screens that are all around you," says Stacy Berman, owner of Stacy's Bootcamp, an outdoor fitness program. When it comes to your workouts in the gym, you're often focused on getting them done so you can move on to the next task in your day. But outside, it's much easier to let go, have fun and enjoy yourself – and all while scorching calories.

One of the biggest payoffs of training al fresco? "It really forces you to be creative, break out of ruts, and use your body in all of the ways it's designed to move," says Berman. For example, not only will trudging uphill provide unique challenges for your lower body, it can also help to alleviate the boredom of your typical humdrum treadmill climb. "The possibilities are infinite," says Berman. "When you vary your terrain, you challenge your body in new ways, which means you're always making fitness gains and are much less likely to plateau or get bored."

PHOTO PAUL BUCETA. MODEL APRIL DEWEESE. TISA/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Unpredictable and varied terrain also keeps the body guessing. "Non-uniform surfaces activate muscles in the legs and ankles that may be underutilised in a flat environment like the gym," says Logan. "Uneven turf and wind resistance can also make small but meaningful differences in your caloric burn." So, even if you take the same workout to two different outdoor settings, you'll work your body in different ways – something you can't pull off indoors.

One of the best ways to put the 'play' into your outdoor workouts is to bring along a partner or friend, says Berman. To really challenge yourself, choose someone more experienced in an activity you want to learn, such as hiking, playing tennis, kayaking, mountain biking, trail running or rock climbing.

The astonishing reality about outdoor exercise is that, although it can be more taxing on your body, you perceive it as being easier. A study published by the American College of Sports Medicine found that subjects who walked on an outdoor track chose a faster pace, yet rated their overall exertion lower than those who walked on a treadmill at a slower pace. "It's much easier to get out of your head when you're outside – you have to stay present to navigate trees, rocks and roots, and being outside is naturally more pleasant, so you're less likely to notice a stitch in your side or fatigue in your legs, which means you can push harder for longer," explains Logan. Channel your inner child, let go and have fun!

PHOTO PAUL BUCETA MODEL LORI HARDER

Train any time you want!
With the outdoors as your personal gym, there are no peak hours and long waits for machines or equipment.

Change Up Your Environment

According to brand new research, different outdoor spaces impact our bodies and minds in different ways. In a 2012 study published in *Environmental Science & Technology*, participants pedalled on a stationary bike while viewing a video on a large screen that simulated riding through Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. The cyclists performed three five-minute rides while watching three versions of the same footage: the first was the unedited lush, green forest, the second was manipulated to look grey, while the third appeared red. The participants rated their perceived level of exertion lowest in the green condition, and reported higher ratings of anger in the red one. Another 2012 study published in the journal *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* found that being exposed to the colour green boosts creativity. Both studies suggest that choosing the most natural environments – those with a lot of trees, grass and plant life – is best for boosting your health and performance.

And while you're at it, consider training near water, too. In a study out of the UK, researchers compared the effects of urban parks, the countryside and the seaside on individuals' well-being, and while all locations were linked to increased calmness and refreshment, those who lived by the coast (seaside) tended to be healthier than those who lived further inland. "Forest and water scenes have been shown to increase relaxing alpha wave activity in the brain and to decrease the heart rate, while urban views are associated with increased muscular tension," says Logan.

His advice: mix it up! Spend time in an outdoor green space one day and head for water the next. "You can still put this into practice if you live in an urban area, since most cities are built near water and have running and bike paths," he says. "You can alternate between parks and the water, and take an occasional trip to more rural or mountainous settings, too," he adds. Just like your body adapts to doing the same workout over time, the mind adapts to seeing the same scenery. "Even the effects of natural environments eventually wear off, but if you spend time in diverse outdoor settings, you'll continue to reap the benefits," he says.

CLEAR YOUR HEAD BY STEPPING OUTDOORS ON YOUR LUNCH BREAK. SPENDING TIME IN NATURE HAS BEEN LINKED WITH 'COGNITIVE RESTORATION' – LIKE HITTING THE 'REFRESH' BUTTON ON YOUR FATIGUED, OVERWORKED BRAIN.

Diversify your settings. *Train in the sand, on a trail, or even in your backyard.*

PHOTO PAUL BUCETA MODELS FATIMA LEITE KUSCH (L) & LAUREN AIKEN (R) TREE ICON KAPRESKI/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Engage Your Senses

To further amp up the positive effects of training outdoors, focus on your awareness. "Mindfulness adds a whole other layer of benefits," says Logan. In Japan, there is a practice called *Shinrin-yoku*, or 'forest bathing,' which involves walking in nature while taking in your surroundings with all of your senses. As a testament to its effects on the brain, a 2012 study found that subjects with depressive disorders who took a 50-minute walk through a wooded park performed significantly better on a memory test than after strolling through an urban setting, reports the *Journal of Affective Disorders*. Trekking through the park also produced a greater improvement in mood compared to walking the city streets. But in order to experience the benefits of 'forest bathing,' mindfulness is key. "When practising *Shinrin-yoku*, engage with your surroundings as if you've never seen them before. Squat down to the ground and notice if there's any animal life. Look up and see what's in the trees," says Logan. In other words, use all of your senses to experience your environment. What do you see, hear, touch and smell?

Becoming more mindful during your outdoor workouts can also keep you safe and help you achieve your fitness goals. "In addition to thinking about your surroundings, feel what's going on in your body," advises Selhub. "For instance, when you run or squat a certain way, notice the changes in your hips or ankles, and see how it feels when you make a slight adjustment to your form." Also, pay attention to how you adjust your cadence or form to changes in the terrain beneath your feet – maybe you run one way on rocks or pebbles, another way when you're on dirt, and yet another way on a path covered with leaves. This increased body awareness can make you less likely to get injured. "With all of your senses activated, you're in the moment of what's happening in your body and around you," says Selhub. "You'll move faster and better, and with your mind-body systems in sync, you'll be less likely to get hurt."

***Connect** with your surroundings, using all your senses to explore.*

***Mindfulness** can be incredibly restorative for the body and mind, research shows.*

PHOTO PAUL BUCETA MODEL BRITTNEY LAYNE HANDICON BANDERLOG/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

BRING THE OUTSIDE IN

Between deadlines and rainy weather, sometimes it's just not possible to get outdoors as much as you'd like. No stress: bring nature to you! One study found that viewing nature through a window resulted in improved physical and mental outcomes in patients, while another study found that indoor plants help to improve focus and keep you calm. Here's expert advice from Alan Logan and Eve Selhub, authors of *Your Brain on Nature* (Wiley, 2012), on how you can reap the al fresco benefits even when indoors:

- *Keep plants in your home and office.*
- *Surround yourself with pictures of nature – like on your desktop and screen saver.*
- *Spend time growing vegetables or herbs in window sill pots.*
- *Adopt a pet, such as a dog.*
- *Use nature-based essential oils, such as lavender, lemon balm and rosemary.*
- *Download music with nature sounds.*
- *Eat a clean, plant-based diet that's packed with fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Engage your senses while shopping, cooking, preparing and consuming your meals.*

CHRISTINA VARGAS

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wake up your WORKOUT

BY **SUSAN KLEINER, PHD, RD, FACN & KIRSTYN BROWN, NUTRITION EDITOR**

WHETHER YOU'RE PREPPING FOR A COMPETITION or just looking to take your gym routine to the next level, look no further than your coffee cup for the kick in the butt that'll get you going. That's right – caffeine, America's favourite drug, has also become one of the top ergogenic* aids among bodybuilders and athletes. You already know a little can be the perfect pick-me-up in the morning, but what you may not know is that supplementing with this stimulant may give you the edge to destroy your next workout, torch extra calories, and even recover faster so that you can give it your all again tomorrow. Of course, it has its downsides, but if used correctly and wisely, it may just help you blow your next workout out of the water. Here's how.

***ER.GO.GEN.IC:** INTENDED TO ENHANCE PHYSICAL PERFORMANCE, STAMINA OR RECOVERY.

BOOST YOUR TRAINING

Good news, ladies: after years of research conducted mainly on men, studies have emerged over the last decade suggesting that women may also benefit from consuming caffeine before exercise. How? For one, a bit of caffeine can result in a bigger pump the next time you're in the gym. In a study out of Florida Atlantic University, well-conditioned women who consumed six milligrams per kilogram of body weight an hour before hitting the iron improved their one-rep max when performing bench presses. However, when they attempted to perform as many reps as possible using 60 per cent of their one-rep max, they did ▶

THE SUPPLEMENT THAT COULD GIVE YOU AN EDGE IN THE GYM.

Research shows that antioxidant levels are higher in dark roasted coffee beans than in the milder roasts.

BEFORE THEY'RE ROASTED, COFFEE BEANS ARE GREEN – ***AND MAY HELP YOU SHED WEIGHT!***

LEAD PHOTO GEOFFREY ROSS DUMBBELL TOVOVAN/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

not eke out any extra reps by supplementing with caffeine. In other words, the caffeine supplements were effective for increasing strength, but not muscular endurance. If you're more of a speed demon, caffeine could help shave a few seconds off your time. One study found that when subjects chugged a drink containing five milligrams of caffeine per kilogram of body weight, they performed better on a 10-kilometre cycling time trial than when they took a placebo.

The bottom line: whether you're training for power, strength or endurance, a little caffeine goes a long way, but keep in mind, you need to be training with gusto. So if you're feeling sluggish before a heavy leg workout or want to smash your HIIT session out of the park, this supplement may give you an edge. But if you're just dropping in on a Pilates class, you may not want to bother with the extra buzz.

BURN MORE FAT

Caffeine is a stimulant – if you're a Starbucks junkie, this isn't news to you. But did you know that the stimulating effect of caffeine may do more than just keep you perky during that early meeting? It may also improve your body's ability to burn more calories. For one, the extra pep in your step gives you the energy to run further or push harder in your workouts, thus scorching more calories. But decades worth of studies have also shown that caffeine boosts metabolism, causing you to burn extra calories even while at rest.

54 PERCENTAGE OF AUSTRALIANS WHO DRINK COFFEE DAILY

Researchers from the US Department of Agriculture found that participants who drank naturally caffeinated oolong tea burned an extra 67 calories per day. What's more, a recent study in the *Journal of Exercise Science & Fitness* showed that exercise newbies who were given caffeine before a workout not only experienced a boost in their performance, they also increased their VO^2 max, which is directly linked to energy expenditure. There's just one catch: the effect of caffeine in these studies is typically only significant in participants who don't ingest it on a regular basis – meaning, if you reach for a cuppa joe or an energy drink on a daily basis, you may not reap the same benefits from caffeine as your chamomile-sipping friend.

EASE EXERCISE PAIN

One way in which caffeine may help improve your athletic performance is by

How to use it

IT DOESN'T TAKE MUCH CAFFEINE TO GIVE YOU AN EDGE, AND YOU SHOULD CUSTOMISE YOUR DOSE BASED ON YOUR BODY WEIGHT. YOUR TRAINING MIGHT BENEFIT FROM A DOSE SLIGHTLY LESS THAN ONE AND A HALF TIMES YOUR BODY WEIGHT IN MILLIGRAMS. FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU WEIGH 60KG, THEN A DOSE OF JUST BELOW 200 MILLIGRAMS MAY GIVE YOU THE BOOST YOU'RE LOOKING FOR. REMEMBER, MORE ISN'T ALWAYS BETTER, AND MAY ACTUALLY HINDER YOUR PERFORMANCE.

DOSAGE: Start with a dose of 3 to a maximum of 6 milligrams of caffeine per kilogram of body weight. Increase the amount as needed. If you are sensitive to caffeine, start out at a much lower dose – one to three milligrams per kilogram of body weight. If you don't get a boost, try upping your dose by 50 per cent the next time. If caffeine supplementation decreases your performance or provides no effect, then it may not be for you.

TIMING: Consume 60 minutes prior to exercise for enhanced performance, or immediately post-workout, paired with a source of carbohydrates, for optimal recovery.

FACTORS: Effects may be greater for morning workouts versus afternoon workouts. Additionally, a tolerance to caffeine may also reduce its effects, so try cutting back on caffeine for seven days to elicit a better response.

So what's a dose?

MAKE SURE YOU DON'T OVERDO IT BY KNOWING HOW MUCH CAFFEINE YOU'RE GETTING. HERE'S HOW THESE POPULAR PRODUCTS STACK UP.

SOURCE	CAFFEINE (mg)
Green tea	24–40 per 225g
Cola	30–45 per 350ml
Espresso shot	40–75 per 30g
Caffeinated gels	30–100 per gel
Red Bull	80 per 250ml can
Brewed coffee	100–200 per 225g

COFFEE RING JUHKU/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM COFFEE SPILL PICSFIVE/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM PILLS GEOFFREY ROSS

DARK CHOCOLATE ESPRESSO MUESLI BARS

Ready in 40 minutes • Makes 8 servings

- 1 cup rolled oats
- ½ cup whole-grain flour
- 2 scoops vanilla whey protein powder
- 1 tbsp raw honey
- 55g dark chocolate–covered espresso beans (70% or higher cocoa content)
- ⅓ cup canola oil
- ¼ cup unsweetened applesauce
- ¼ tsp sea salt
- ¼ tsp baking soda
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp vanilla or almond extract

1. Preheat oven to 160°C.
2. Place all ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Mix with a wooden spoon to combine.
3. Spread mixture evenly in a 20cmx20cm baking dish. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until golden around the edges. Let cool, and slice into 8 bars. Serve or refrigerate for later.

Nutrients per serving: *Calories: 240, Total Fats: 13g, Saturated Fat: 2g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 10mg, Salt: 110mg, Total Carbohydrates: 26g, Dietary Fibre: 2g, Sugars: 7g, Protein: 8g, Iron: 2mg*

COFFEE BEANS TOMMASOLIZZUL/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM MUESLI BARS MAYA VISNYEI

stimulating the central nervous system, resulting in improved focus and even reducing the perception of fatigue. It may even ease sensations of muscle pain, according to one study in which women who took caffeine an hour before an intense 30-minute cycling trial experienced less muscle pain in their legs compared to those taking a placebo. But there's more. Pair a bit of caffeine with some carbs in your post-workout meal, and your body may start repairing sore muscles almost immediately. A study in the *Journal of Applied Physiology* found that athletes who ingested a caffeine and carb combo after a hardcore workout had 66 per cent more glycogen – which aids growth and repair – in their muscles four hours later than those who refueled with carbohydrates alone.

THE BAD NEWS

Before you start doing espresso shots before your workouts, there are a few things you should know. First, caffeine is addictive, therefore it should be consumed in moderation – and definitely not used as a crutch for not getting enough sleep. Double check with your doc that caffeine is right for you. Secondly, take extra care if you have heart conditions like high blood pressure, anxiety, are pregnant or nursing, or have trouble sleeping. And if you're sensitive to stimulants, take it easy at first – remember, a little goes a long way. You can always increase your dosage by increments until you get a boost. Finally, caffeine has a half-life of five to seven hours, meaning that if you chug a Tall from Zaraffas an hour before your 5pm workout, half of the caffeine you consumed could still be in your system when you're ready to crash at 11pm. So try not to consume any after 2 to 3pm, depending on your bedtime.

For ways to kick-start your workout without the stimulants, see page 116 to 119.

Green Coffee Bean Extract: MIRACLE OR MYTH?

THERE'S BEEN A LOT OF BUZZ LATELY SURROUNDING THE FAT-BURNING EFFECTS OF GREEN COFFEE BEAN EXTRACT SUPPLEMENTS. After television GP Dr. Oz praised the stuff on his show, calling it a "miracle" product, health food stores can barely keep their shelves stocked. So, is it a super supplement, or just a lot of hype? We'll let you be the judge.

COST: $20 for a one-month supply

WHAT IT IS: Raw coffee beans are actually green, not brown, and rich in chlorogenic acid, a naturally occurring chemical that research has shown to boost metabolism and even block or reduce the absorption of fat from food. During the roasting process, however, most of the chlorogenic acid is lost, along with its fat-fighting potential. Green coffee bean extract supplements are made from raw coffee beans that have been concentrated and put into capsule form, and they are now one of the hottest weight-loss products currently on the market.

THE SCIENCE: At press time, few scientific studies had been conducted on the effects of green coffee bean extract. One of the most notable and controlled studies was published in January 2012 in the journal *Diabetes, Metabolic Syndrome and Obesity: Targets and Therapy*, and found that 16 overweight subjects lost an average of 7.7kg in 22 weeks of taking 1,050- or seven hundred–milligram doses. There's just one caveat: the study has been slammed for using such a small trial group – and it might be worth noting that a supplement manufacturer picked up the tab. However, green coffee bean extract is packed with polyphenols – antioxidants that may help prevent chronic diseases associated with oxidative stress, such as heart disease and some cancers. So if you decide to give this supplement a shot, at the very least, you could reap benefits from the antioxidant activity, even if you don't shed a tonne of fat. ■

HAVE YOU BEEN WORKING HARD AND EATING CLEAN WHOLE FOODS BUT YOUR ABS STILL DON'T LOOK LIKE THOSE OF THE WOMEN IN *OXYGEN*? ARE YOU MISSING OUT ON KEY EXERCISES? MAYBE IT ISN'T WHAT YOU'RE DOING, BUT HOW YOU ARE DOING IT.

Build your foundation for

SIX-PACK SUCCESS

BY **AMANDA KOTEL**

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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Think that sprinters, gymnasts and weight lifters do crunches to get their killer abs?

Many of them have envy-worthy abs, not by doing crunches, but by learning how to properly brace their spine during dynamic movements and keeping it braced, controlled and protected the entire time. Abs come from lifting heavy through full range of motions that are controlled from the beginning of the movement to the end.

When structuring your workouts, it's important to set it up to include all of the movement patterns each muscle does.

TRY THESE PRE- AND POST-WORKOUT AB MOVES TO TAKE YOUR TRAINING TO THE NEXT LEVEL:

Pre-Workout: Dynamically Activate

BIRD DOG

Target Muscles: lower back, rectus abdominis, glutes, deltoids, obliques and hamstrings

Set-up: Get down on all fours with your back in a neutral spine (table top) position.

Action: Extend one arm and the opposite leg up, keeping your leg at a 90-degree angle. Slowly release and repeat, then swap sides and repeat. Perform three sets of 12 on each side. If raising both an arm and leg is too advanced, try only raising your leg (as pictured).

Post-Workout: Isometrically Activate

SIDE PLANK

Target Muscles: obliques, rectus femoris, lats, back extensors and glutes

Set-up: Lie on the floor on one side with your body in a straight line, feet stacked with insteps together.

Action: Lift your hips off the floor so that your weight is evenly distributed between your hand and the side of one foot. Extend your top arm toward the ceiling and hold for 30 to 45 seconds (use a dumbbell to increase difficulty if it's too easy). Repeat three times on each side.

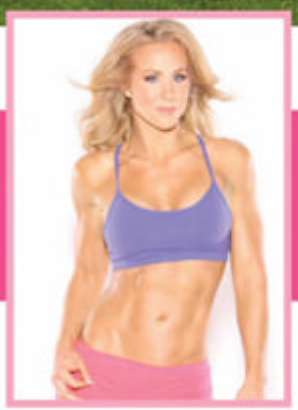

PHOTO CREDIT PAUL BUCETA

AMANDA KOTEL

B.Sc Exercise Science, exercise rehabilitation specialist, personal trainer and online transformation coach.

NOT SURE IF YOU ARE USING YOUR CORE PROPERLY DURING YOUR LIFTS? TRY THIS TEST TO SEE IF YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF YOUR MOVEMENTS DURING EXERCISE:

Let's begin with a lat pull-down. Set up with a moderate-to-heavy weight, initiate movement and at the halfway point through the concentric contraction, freeze for one to two seconds. Make sure you hold that very spot then continue to pull downward and stop at the bottom and hold again. Slowly release the weight up, doing the same on the eccentric contraction (on the way back up). Use this new way of completing your exercises to learn how to build your mind-muscle connection as well as your core strength.

We all start somewhere

BY **BELINDA POTTER**

PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

I LOVE MARIE FORLEO. IF YOU ARE AN ASPIRING ENTREPRENEUR OR JUST LOOKING FOR WAYS TO TRULY 'SHOW UP' IN THIS LIFE THEN THIS WOMAN WILL FLOAT YOUR BOAT! Recently I saw a fabulous post of hers about giving yourself permission to start small and 'sucky'. While Marie was specifically talking about not letting cringe-worthy moments stop you from pursuing your career aspirations, the same sentiment can be applied to your health and fitness goals.

Let me briefly share a cringe-worthy moment of mine with you. Not long ago I bought myself a bicycle to commute to work and I have to tell you it's been a very humbling experience to be really (yes, really) bad at something. I have had to wholeheartedly embrace being a 'beginner'. I've fallen off at traffic lights, hit curbs, had to get off and push up (no-so-big) hills and had one VERY sore butt! Frankly, I stink. Admittedly, this was a few months ago, but I still hate it when those seasoned cyclists fly past me with their piston-like legs and cornering precision. Damn it, I just want to let their tyres down! But I know they had to start somewhere, too. At some stage they were a beginner just like me.

My frustration got me thinking: this is a lot like how it must feel to be a gym newbie. The gym can be an intimidating place. There are muscles to learn, contraptions to master and descriptions of exercises can feel like a game of charades. It never ceases to amaze me how many women say they want to get fit or trim down a little BEFORE signing up to the gym. Really? I'm pretty sure that's what gyms are for. Let me put your mind at ease: if you are new to the gym or self-conscious about your weight (or both), the vast majority of seasoned gym-goers are secretly giving you props for putting yourself out there. We love this stuff and we want you to get hooked on health as well. So high five sista – you can work in with me any day!

Now, where to start?

If you are going into this gym thing with your training wheels on then it is well worth investing in a personal trainer for your first few sessions. Most gyms will offer to write you a program and take you through correct exercise technique as part

"Don't take yourself too seriously! Life's purpose is to connect with people and have fun. The gym is the perfect place to do both."

of your membership, but you might want to suss out your trainer's credentials first. Do they have a speciality? Do they look as though they walk the talk? Can they work around your injuries? Watch them on the floor interacting with their clients. Are they attentive or just a glorified rep counter? Choose someone that you feel comfortable with and who will get you started on the right foot.

Of course, there are MANY program variations, but most trainers will start you off on a simple full-body workout to learn the basics. As you become accustomed to the training and movement patterns you may want to challenge yourself further and progress to a 'split' (splitting the muscle groups you train over a number of days) such as push and pull movements on separate days, or upper and lower body exercises on alternate training days. Eventually you might choose to do a more advanced split over four or five days.

Machines can help you to develop your kinaesthetic awareness – we all start off with our wobbly boots on, so don't sweat it. Co-ordination or neuromuscular adaption – when to turn on certain muscles and shut off others, how much electro-chemical charge to send your muscles to generate force, and sequencing movement etc. – comes with practice. Once you have this down pat then you can safely tinker with the free weights without worrying about knocking yourself out on the incline dumbbell press. It's important to allow for ample recovery time and, while being overzealous with your new lifestyle may be admirable to some, it can also lead to fatigue and/or injury due to overtraining. So be patient and learn to listen to your body. Still sore? Give it another day or opt for a lower-intensity exercise – do a yoga class, go for a walk or hit the pool.

HERE ARE MY TOP TIPS FOR FAST-TRACKING FEELING LIKE A BEGINNER:

- The trick to building confidence is to set small, achievable goals and build on your success.
- Have the courage to be rubbish – just for a little while until you get the hang of things.
- Find yourself a mentor to show you the ropes and/or a buddy to look like a goofball with. Don't take yourself too seriously! Life's purpose is to connect with people and have fun. The gym is the perfect place to do both.
- Goals require action! Even the 'best' plan won't reap results until you consistently apply it.
- Don't chop and change. There is more than one way to get in shape, so once you have found a plan, stick to it for at least four weeks before moving on to the next.
- Don't try to change everything at once. 'All or nothing' thinking will eventually lead to nothing – fact.
- Identify obstacles and prioritise changing habits that will give you the most 'bang for your buck'. Habitual snoozer? Focus your energy on getting up as soon as your alarm goes off (the first time!). Disorganised in the mornings? Prepare your meals ahead of time and lay your clothes out the night before. Systematically remove obstacles one by one before refocusing your energy and tackling the next.
- No step is too small provided that you make progress (this goes for your diet too). Ask yourself frequently: does this action move me toward or away from my goal?
- Don't let a slip-up lead to a meltdown. Experience leads to expertise – even failure offers us a valuable lesson. So, chalk it up and move on.

There are so many great trainers and resources out there and, of course, you have the best resource of all in your hands right now. So my final words of advice are to stop procrastinating by trying to get fit before you hit the gym or come up with the 'perfect' plan – just do it and enjoy the challenge of being all shiny and new!

BELINDA POTTER

Belinda Potter is one of Australia's leading athletes in the fitness industry, particularly in the area of figure competitions. She began training in her mid-teens but it wasn't until her early 20s that her training commitment and consistency increased, eventually leading her to the figure competition stage where she won and placed in many competitions, including ANB, NABBA and IFBB championships.

Belinda loves the challenge of competing and is constantly amazed by what people are capable of achieving when they are truly driven to accomplish a goal. Today she works as a personalised online coach who specialises in women's figure, fitness and bikini competition.

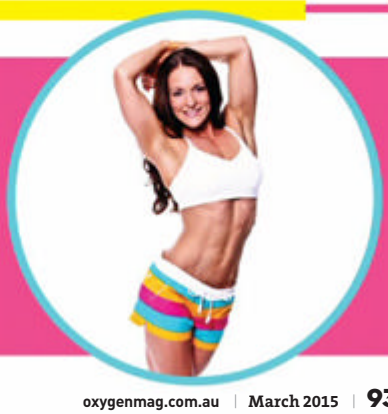

PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN

Does social media #influence your motivation to exercise and eat healthy?

DID YOU KNOW THAT WITHOUT YOUR CONSENT, SOCIAL NETWORKS CAN INFLUENCE BOTH THE FOODS YOU EAT AND HOW YOU CHOOSE TO EXERCISE? 'CONSENT' MAY BE A STRONG WORD BUT WITH AN INCREASING DEPENDENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA, OUR LIVES ARE BECOMING MORE AND MORE INTERTWINED WITHOUT ANY FORM OF FACE-TO-FACE CONNECTIONS. THIS IS INFLUENCING THE CHOICES WE MAKE ON A DAILY BASIS AND THE WAYWE LIVE OUR LIVES OVERALL.

OVER 32 YEARS SOCIAL SCIENTISTS NICOLAS CHRISTAKIS AND JAMES FOWLER EXAMINED THE SOCIAL ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN 12,067 PEOPLE AND THE DIRECT LINK BETWEEN OBESITY AND THESE SOCIAL CONNECTIONS. In their investigations it was determined that you are 57 per cent more likely to be obese if you have a friend who is obese and 20 per cent more likely if your friend's friend is obese – independent of direct physical contact. Termed 'homophily', it is proposed that like-minded people attract other like-minded people. Not only that, people are highly influenced in general, not only by those who surround them, but also by those with whom they have no direct contact except via association.

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Just like the social links of obesity, homophily may also be possible when it comes to nutritious food selection and preparation, the desire to be physically active and the type of exercise in which we engage. A classic example of this can be seen through the social connections on Facebook. Here you have no direct relationship with a high proportion of your Facebook 'friends' yet you seem to know their every move and daily activities. Your Facebook 'friends', some of whom you have never had any form of verbal or physical contact, potentially indirectly influence your fitness activities. Alternatively, it may be your activities are influencing their behaviour.

Here is how it works:

You log onto Facebook and read about your friend or a friend's friend new 12-week diet and fitness challenge. By reading their regular posts and watching their physical transformation, the cycle of influence begins; the seed is planted in all who read the posts. Chances are you, your friends, and your friends of your Facebook friends will start to – whether it's conscious or unconscious – evaluate their own dietary and exercise practices and how they, too, can gain similar results.

If you are already a highly motivated person who lives and breathes nutrition and fitness? Why not pay it forward via social media? Help others become healthier and more conscious of what they eat. You could plant the seed for fun and effective exercise activities, use inspiration as a selling point to people on your social network and lead by example. Post links to awesome sites that motivate you, Pinterest your favourite motivational quotes and images, upload your own personal progress on Instagram or start your own fitness blog.

Use social media contact to encourage other women on your social media websites to get involved in charitable women's fitness events.

Help promote the Mater International Women's Day Fun Run and raise money for breast cancer; inspire other women to enter the Sussan's Women's Fun Run; or post national fun run calendars and create a challenge board. For a less competitive approach, encourage your online girlfriends to get active, take the initiative to start your own women's running group or organise various fitness activities via social media.

Be open and aware, though, that not all people will feel as strongly as you do about 6am mountain hikes or salivate at the sight of a cacao chia seed coconut ball recipe. But keep in mind that people who view your enthusiasm negatively may still indirectly achieve something positive from your willingness to share your healthy outlook on life.

Social media influence on your diet and exercise is not purely limited to Facebook. The Internet is a goldmine of information. New and inspiring fitness motivators are abundant and fitness and nutrition apps are continuously being uploaded, leaving no excuse for lack of inspiration. Easy to install and use, they are generally very affordable or even free. Apps such as MyFitnessPal, RunKeeper and Calorie Counter are fantastic tools to track, monitor and record your fitness and nutritional progress. Plus you can even share your progress and hard work with your friends.

Alternatively, set the bar one step higher in the challenge stakes by signing up to more interactive modes of online fitness apps such as UtiliFit where fitness challenges are an interactive online game, competing against other fitness enthusiasts throughout the day to climb a leader board. This fantastic tool encourages your more competitive social contacts to get active whilst being part of the new wave of fitness apps created to make fitness more interactive and fun.

The ways in which people we are linked to by association influence our daily lives is extensive. What has been mentioned is just the tip of the iceberg. Never underestimate the influence your health behaviour has over others – and vice versa – regardless of whether it is on a conscious or unconscious level. Social media has the potential to generate a wave of positive health and fitness motivation globally. Initiate physical fitness challenges and share healthy food recipes with those in your social media network to spread your contagious positive health vibes for others to catch.

DEE TAYLOR

Dee is a nutrition, fitness and motivational writer; certified personal trainer; and group fitness instructor. She is now in her final year of a Bachelor of Health Science majoring in nutrition at the University of Queensland. Her studies are focused on understanding health behaviours crucial to identifying the behavioural patterns needed to navigate successful health changes.

With an intense passion for diet and exercise, Dee trained for her first figure competition in 2008. She placed second in the ANB QLD figure novice, third in the INBA figure open and fifth in the ANB Australian figure novice titles. She has also competed in numerous half-marathons.

Dee is also a busy mother of two. She uses her experience to help other women find balance between family, work and training. Known both personally and professionally for her great ability to motivate others to adopt changes in their life nutritionally, physically and mentally, Dee uses her extensive knowledge to educate and mentor both fitness professionals and clients.

MUSCLE UP your plate

BY **JORDANA BROWN**

YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THE TERM 'SUPERFOOD' LATELY, BUT WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU – THE GIRL WITH THE PERFECT HIGHLIGHTS BENCH-PRESSING HER OWN WEIGHT? IN ONE WORD; EVERYTHING! FROM ELEVATING GROWTH HORMONES TO SHRINKING THE SIZE OF YOUR FAT CELLS, EACH OF THESE FOODS POSSESS A BIOCHEMICAL COMPOUND THAT CAN TAKE YOUR WORKOUT EFFORTS ON THE HEALTHIEST SHORTCUT EVER. CHOOSE A FEW OR COMBINE THEM ALL INTO YOUR BUSY DAY WITH THESE SIMPLE AND QUICK RECIPES.

BLAST FAT AND INCREASE MUSCLE GAINS BY COMBINING NATURAL METABOLISM-BOOSTING FOODS. **BONUS: THEY'RE EASY ON THE WALLET.**

Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com

1. GREEN TEA

Sip up to burn more calories, lose belly fat and aid muscle repair. Studies have shown that drinking at least three cups a day can help burn 80 more calories – thanks to mighty antioxidants called polyphenols (specifically epigallocatechin gallate, EGCG for short). EGCG increases norepinephrine levels, which induces the breakdown of fat stored in fat cells. A 2008 study published in the *Journal of Nutrition* found that green tea, along with exercise, enhances fat loss in the abdominal area. What's more, it can even blunt systemic inflammation, which can help speed post-workout recovery.

Cherry Green Tea Smoothie

READY IN 5 MINUTES
SERVES 2

Ingredients:

- 1 cup green tea
- 1 cup frozen cherries
- 1 cup 2% Greek yoghurt
- 1 scoop soy protein powder

Method:

Put all ingredients in blender and blend until smooth.

Nutrients per serve:

Calories: 235, Total Fats: 3g, Saturated Fat: 2g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 8mg, Sodium: 193mg, Total Carbohydrates: 29g, Dietary Fibre: 3g, Sugars: 23g, Protein: 23g, Iron: 2mg.

2. GREEK YOGHURT

Get more muscle-building protein and few fat-promoting carbs than in regular yoghurt. This creamier yoghurt contains casein – a slow-digesting protein that will keep hunger at bay for a longer period of time. Like regular yoghurt, this variety contains beneficial bacteria known as 'active cultures'. Having more of this type of bacteria in the intestines is linked to improved immune function (fewer sick days out of the gym), improved digestion and less bloat.

3. APPLES

Get stronger and lose more fat by eating just one apple a day. Actually, you get triple the body benefits from fibre, antioxidants and flavonoids. Fibre will keep digestion thrumming along, and antioxidants can help make you stronger and leaner. A study conducted on rats found that those who were fed apple polyphenols demonstrated nearly 10 per cent more muscle strength, but had lost 30 per cent less fat than the control group. Flavonoids (antioxidant's protective cousin) can prevent inflammation and overproduction of fat in your liver cells.

Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com

Nutty Apple-Blueberry Muesli

READY IN 50 MINUTES | MAKES 6 SERVINGS

- 2 cups oats
- ¼ cup ground flaxseeds
- 2 tbsp whole flaxseeds
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1/3 cup honey
- ½ cup walnuts, roughly chopped
- Cooking spray
- ½ cup dried apple slices, diced
- ¼ cup dried blueberries

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 150°C. In a large bowl, combine first six ingredients, stirring well until mixed and coated.
2. Spray cooking spray on a large baking tray and spread mixture onto it. Bake for 40 minutes, stirring after every 10. When done, add dried fruit and mix to combine.

Nutrients per serving:

Calories: 366, Total Fats: 19g, Saturated Fat: 2g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 0mg, Sodium: 23mg, Total Carbohydrates: 46g, Dietary Fibre: 7g, Sugars: 23g, Protein: 6g, Iron: 1mg.

4. BLUEBERRIES

Great for post-workout recovery and your waistline. Cornell University researchers found that out of 25 types of fruit, blueberries are among the most powerful antioxidants and are best able to fight free radicals – antioxidants help protect everything from muscle tissue to the tiny capillaries that feed it. Another study published in the journal *Food Chemistry* found that rats fed blueberry extract ate less food than those who weren't.

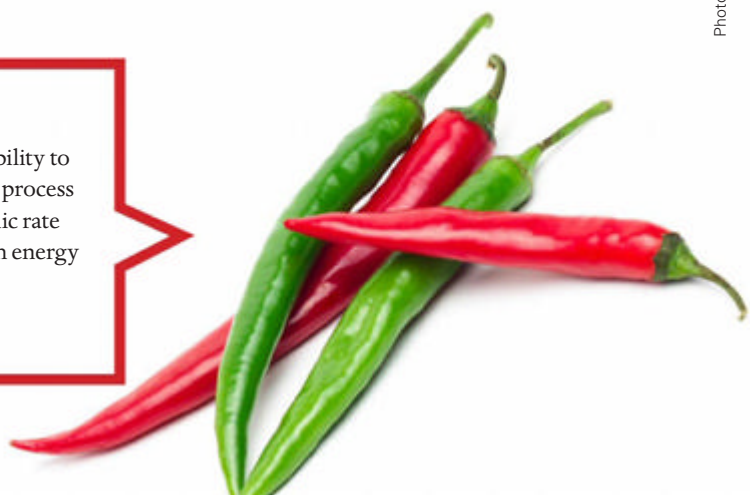
5. WALNUTS

Unlike much-lauded almonds, walnuts contain more heart-healthy omega-3s. Don't be afraid of the slight increase in fat between the two. Aside from lowering your cholesterol, eating more healthy fats can keep you lean because they're preferentially burned for fuel instead of being stored as fat. Think of it this way: when your chest meal contains more saturated fat than you intended, the ALA in walnuts can help prevent it from sticking to your arterial walls.

Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com

6. CHILLI PEPPERS

Capsaicin, the phytochemical that makes peppers spicy, has the ability to minimise fat cells before they full form, according to research from the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*. What's long known is its ability to induce thermogenesis, the process of increasing your metabolic rate by generating heat through energy expenditure – fat burning!



Spicy Tofu Scramble

READY IN 20 MINUTES | MAKES 2 SERVINGS

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 medium jalapeno, seeded and diced (keep seeds in for a spicier scramble)
- ½ green capsicum, diced
- 1 red capsicum, diced
- 1 tsp reduced-salt soy sauce
- ½ tsp turmeric
- Salsa (optional)
- 350g silken tofu, firm

Method:

1. Put oil and onions in a large skillet over medium-low heat. Stir often. Let onions soften for about three minutes.
2. Add peppers, soy sauce, turmeric and salsa (optional) and stir to combine. Cook for about 2 minutes, then crumble tofu into skillet with your hands. Stir to combine, and let cook 5 minutes or until warmed through.

Nutrients per serving:

Calories: 230, Total Fats: 12g, Saturated Fat: 1g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 0mg, Sodium: 145mg, Total Carbohydrates: 20g, Dietary Fibre: 4g, Sugars: 9g, Protein: 15g, Iron: 2mg.

8. TOMATOES

Tomatoes contain three critical compounds: quercetin, which is found mostly in the skin, helps your muscles to recover after workouts by fighting inflammation; vitamin C, mostly known as a cold fighter, has also been shown to be exceptionally good as a fat fighter; and lycopene, a powerful antioxidant that fights heart disease and cancer. Cooked whole tomatoes (or canned or tomato products like sauce and paste) appear to make lycopene more available.

7. SOY

Soy can protect your lean physique because it contains an isoflavone called genistein, shown to reduce the size and number of fat cells produced. Much discussed for its oestrogen-like capabilities, these same compounds are responsible for soy's impressive slew of benefits: from protecting cardiovascular health and promoting healthy cholesterol levels to preventing cancer.

Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com

9. GARLIC

Three compounds (allicin, diallyl disulphide and diallyl trisulfide) in garlic have been shown to increase testosterone production, which can help to boost energy, making you want to head to the gym to build fat-burning muscle. (Don't worry, you won't get bulky!) In fact, if you plan on staying fit for the long haul, you need more testosterone because your levels drop as you age. Another bonus: the same compounds reduce cortisol levels, the stress hormone which can promote fat storage.

Garlic-Stuffed Chicken

READY IN 55 MINUTES | MAKES 2 SERVINGS

- 2 chicken breasts (about 500g)
- 10 cloves garlic, sliced lengthwise, about ½ cm thick
- 1 egg, beaten
- ½ cup wheat germ

Method:

1. Preheat oven to 190°C.
2. Place chicken on a cutting board and, using a sharp knife, poke the knife into the breasts, being careful not to cut all the way through. Make about 10 cuts per breast. Shove 1 slice of garlic into each cut, then coat each breast with egg, let excess drain off, then coat with wheat germ.
3. Put chicken breasts on a baking rack set over a baking tray and cook for 45 minutes, or until cooked through.

Nutrients per serving:

Calories: 418, Total Fats: 9g, Saturated Fat: 3g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 238mg, Sodium: 187mg, Total Carbohydrates: 20g, Dietary Fibre: 4g, Sugars: 0g, Protein: 66g, Iron: 5mg.

Photo Credit: Shutterstock.com

10. WATERMELON

A slice can help you lose weight and keep your muscles tight, thanks to nitric oxide. Like tomatoes, watermelon is an excellent source of lycopene. But it also contains significant amounts of the amino acid citrulline, which is converted in the body to arginine. Arginine, in turn, is converted into nitric oxide – shown to decrease fat storage while maintaining lean muscle mass.

Roast Beef & Watermelon Salad

READY IN 15 MINUTES | MAKES 4 SERVINGS

- 4 cups arugula
- 500g watermelon, cut into chunks
- ½ red onion, thinly sliced
- 110g fat-free feta cheese
- 450g cooked roast beef, sliced
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- 1 tsp dried parsley

Method:

1. Combine first five ingredients in a large bowl.
2. In a smaller bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients to make dressing.
3. Pour dressing over salad and toss to coat.

Nutrients per serving:

Calories: 402, Total Fats: 19g, Saturated Fat: 4g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 65mg, Sodium: 312mg, Total Carbohydrates: 12g, Dietary Fibre: 1g, Sugars: 8g, Protein: 38g, Iron: 4mg.

Put It All Together

Is it possible to eat all 10 foods in one day? Take a look; it's easier than you think!

BREAKFAST
Whole-grain waffle topped with blueberries and chopped toasted walnuts

LUNCH
Tuna with tomato-garlic sauce

PRE-WORKOUT
Soy-watermelon shake (blend soy protein powder with watermelon)

POST-WORKOUT
Greek yoghurt topped with diced apples

DINNER
Chicken breast with edamame succotash

MUSCLE ARENA

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PRODUCT REVIEW

VMI'S PROTOLYTE IS A COLD PRESSED WHEY PROTEIN CONCENTRATE.

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The slow, low temperature process in which Protolyte is produced makes for a higher grade protein. Unlike your standard protein isolate, this concentrate blend contains the immune building factors and nutrients vital for a strong and healthy body.

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WHAT MAKES VMI'S PROTOLYTE AN UNMATCHABLE POST-TRAINING PROTEIN CHOICE?

It contains added electrolytes to promote hydration, improve athletic performance and helps with recovery after training. Electrolytes are necessary for optimal body function, but are easily lost through sweat. It is crucial we replenish these after a strenuous workout.

Protolyte not only has a natural flavour that tastes delicious, but also leaves you feeling light and your muscles feeling full. It is gluten free and contains healthy digestive enzymes.

Choosing a high quality protein concentrate like VMI's Protolyte, means you are ensuring that your body gets the best replenishment and recovery.

Better recovery makes for a better training session which brings you better results!

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Fine-Tune Your GLUTES

You squat, you lunge, you squat some more – all in the name of building up your backside. But now that you've got all that lovely muscle, it's time to fine-tune it, and Oxygen has got the workout to do just that.

BY **LARA MCGLASHAN** | IMAGES BY **DALLAS OLSEN** | FITNESS MODEL: **BIANCA DANIELS** | HAIR AND MAKE-UP BY **TEGAN WOODFORD**

This six-move workout will help perk up and tighten your rear view. Short shorts, anyone?

"Often, people don't fire properly from their glutes, which can affect efficient movement and development," says Simone De La Rue, celebrity trainer and author of Body by Simone: The 8-Week total Body Makeover Plan. "These exercises specifically target the glutes and are my proven go-to moves that will help to sculpt your booty and assist in building overall strength and power in the posterior chain."

Because you've already built a great base of muscle, this workout uses high repetitions with only your bodyweight or a light band as resistance instead of heavy weight with low reps. "High reps will accomplish adequate muscle fatigue to refine and tighten those muscles, help shed fat and increase strength," De La Rue explains. Repping it out at 20 or above will also burn like heck, putting your endurance and lactic acid threshold to the test.

DO THIS WORKOUT ONCE A WEEK AS PART OF YOUR REGULAR BODY PART SPLIT OR UP TO THREE TIMES A WEEK IF YOU REALLY WANT TO KICK YOUR OWN BUTT. IN ABOUT FOUR WEEKS, YOU'LL LOOK SO GREAT YOU'LL WANT TO ENTER THE ROOM BACKWARD!

EXERCISE	SETS	REPS
Band Bun Lifter	3	30 each leg
Froggy	3	20
Double-Knee Drop	3	20
Window Washer	3	10 each leg
Vertical Glute Bridge	3	30 each leg

"Often, people don't fire properly from their glutes, which can affect efficient movement and development."

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

Medicine ball

Resistance band

Mat (optional)

Cardio for Your Glutes

Cardio burns calories and fat, and it can strip the extra padding off your backside to reveal the sleek muscle underneath. But not all cardio is created equal, and some modalities are more glute-centric than others. Check out this list of outdoor activities you can do to whip your rear view into shape quickly and efficiently. Do three to five sessions of 30 to 60 minutes of cardiovascular activity each week for optimal endurance and overall health.

1 Band Bun Lifter

TARGET MUSCLES: glutes, hamstrings

Set-up: Get onto your hands and knees with your hands underneath your shoulders and your knees underneath your hips. Loop a resistance band over the centre of one shoe, foot flexed, and extend your leg away from you, toe touching the ground. **[A]**

Action: Keeping your hips square, lift your leg until it's parallel to the floor. Pause and squeeze your glutes, **[B]** then lower slowly to the start.

TIP

As you lift your leg, simultaneously contract your abs to keep your hips square and your back flat.

2 Froggy

TARGET MUSCLES: glutes, lower back, hamstrings, inner thighs

Set-up: Lie facedown with your legs open to the sides and bend your knees. Place the medicine ball between your heels, feet flexed, with the soles of your shoes facing the ceiling. Place your hands together on the floor. **[A]**

Action: Press the ball toward the ceiling, squeezing your glutes and lifting your knees off the floor as high as you can. **[B]** Pause a moment at the top, then lower your legs to complete one repetition.

TIP

Your range of motion here is small, so don't go for height; squeeze and hold for a full count, then release.

TIP

If this is too challenging, try doing it with one knee at a time.

3 *Double-knee drop*

TARGET MUSCLES: glutes, hamstrings, abs, chest

Set-up: Get into plank position with your hands underneath your shoulders and your head, hips and heels in line. **[A]**

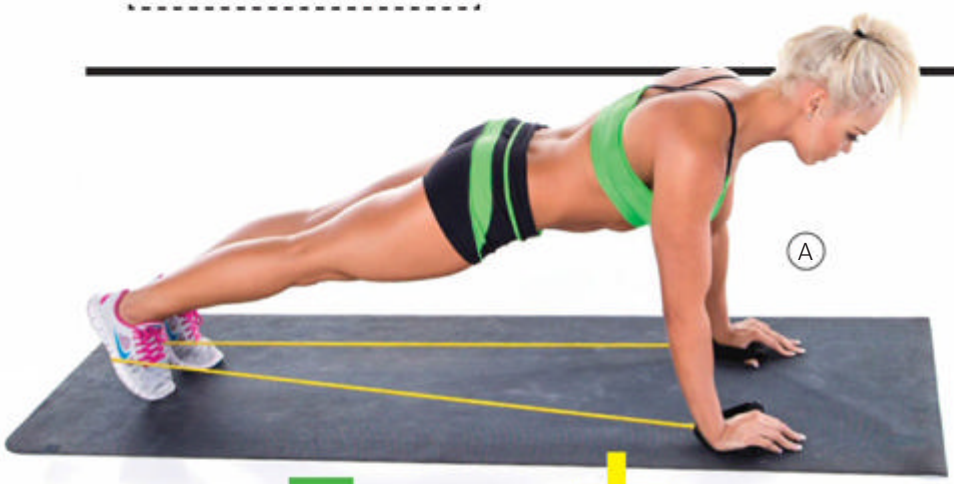
Action: Bend both knees and touch them briefly on the floor, keeping your abs tight and your hips lifted. **[B]** Straighten your legs again to complete one rep.

4 *Window washer*

TARGET MUSCLES: glutes, outer thighs, inner thighs, abs, chest

Set-up: Hold a resistance band in each hand, hooking it around the base of your right leg. Get into a plank position with your hands underneath your shoulders and your head, hips and heels in line. **[A]**

Action: Lift your right toe off the floor and move it out to the side as far as you can. **[B]** Hold momentarily then move it back to the start to complete one rep. Do all reps on one side before switching.



TIP

Don't drop your nonworking hip as you open your opposite leg. Keep your abs tight and your hips square throughout.

5 *Vertical glute bridge*

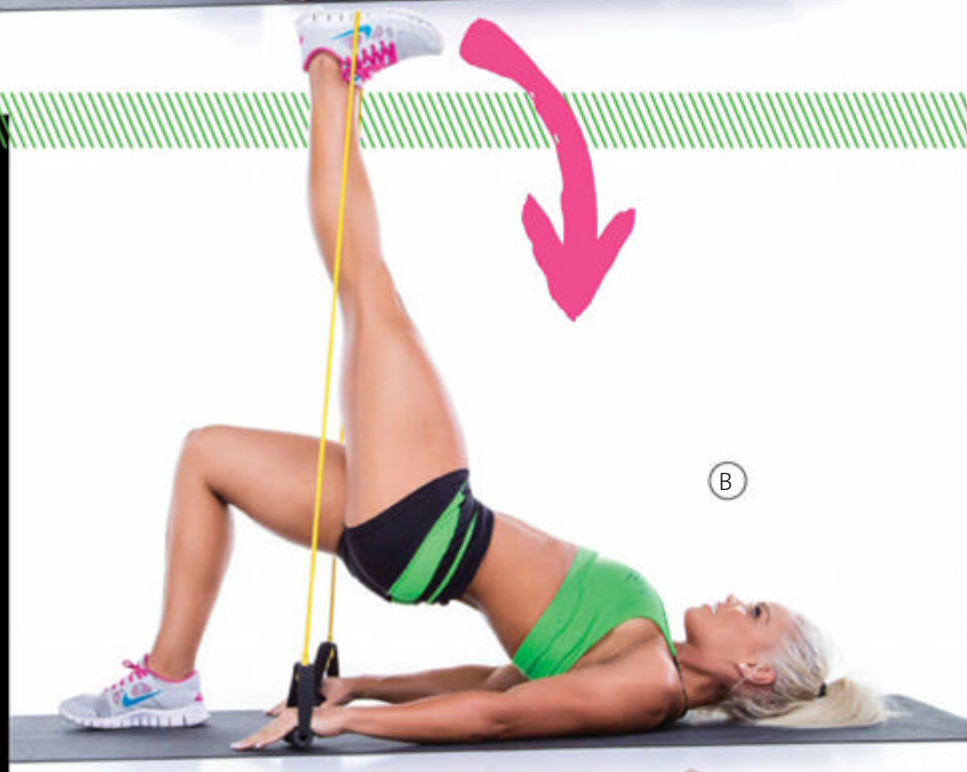
TARGET MUSCLES: quads, hamstrings, glutes

Set-up: Lie face-up with your right knee bent, foot flat on the floor. Loop the centre of the band around the instep of your left shoe and hold an end in each hand at your sides on the floor. Extend your left leg toward the ceiling until it's straight, pushing against the band as you straighten. **[A]**

Action: Raise your hips off the floor, pushing through your right foot to do so. Lift up until your right quad and torso create a straight line. **[B]** Pause for a moment at the top, then lower your hips until they're just above the floor (don't put rest on the floor). That's one rep. Repeat all reps on one side before swapping legs.

TIP

As you raise your hips, simultaneously contract your abs to keep your hips square and your back flat.



Top Tips:

1. Don't hide your butt under baggy trackpants or shorts – make sure you can see your muscles working as extra motivation!

2. To add extra burn to your workout, hold at the top of each move for 15 to 30 seconds.

3. We say it a lot, but it's extremely important: don't forget those abs! Make sure they're TIGHT for the entirety of each move to get the most out of your workout and, more importantly, to avoid injury.

BIANCA DANIELS

South African-born fitness specialist and self-confessed "health and fitness junkie", Bianca, was born with a sub-luxed hip. This resulted in one of her legs being shorter than the other. After several surgeries to repair the imbalance, doctors were successful; however, she was told she would be "lucky" if she could ever walk properly.

With a never-give-up attitude, Bianca took to sport, finding a passion for swimming at a young age and representing South Africa at two international events. After moving to Australia, she discovered the sport of fitness modelling and hasn't looked back, describing the competition stage as somewhere she feels she "belongs". Bianca encourages anyone who hasn't give the sport a go to take it on at least once – you never know, it could change your life.

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JUSTINE PHOTO CREDIT MARIYA MOVA

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Justine Switalla- Health and Fitness Ambassador

Move of the MONTH

Leg Lift

Strengthen your leg muscles to better support your growing belly and ease any back pain you may feel during pregnancy.

TOP TIP: KEEP YOUR SHOULDERS, HIPS AND KNEES IN A STRAIGHT LINE BEFORE YOU START THE MOVE.

How to do it:
Lie on your right side, your head resting on your arm. Place your left hand on your hip for support and slowly raise your left leg as high as you can. Lower your leg back down slowly. Repeat 10 times, then switch sides.

TOP TIP: YOU CAN ALSO PERFORM THIS EXERCISE WHILE BENDING YOUR LIFTING LEG AT THE KNEE.

REAL MUMS REAL FIT

"We get funny comments when the four of us go for jogs, such as, 'Do you have room for one more?'"

AFTER COREY BROCK had her first daughter, Annie, she hit the pavement doing what she loves most – running. Soon after her second child, son Jesse, was born, she swapped it for a double jogging stroller and ran a half marathon when he turned 18 months old. After the birth of her daughter, Molly, Corey kept on going. "I found a triple jogging stroller, picked it up as fast as I could, and never regretted it!" On their jogs, Corey and the kids love breathing in the fresh air and encountering wildlife. "Some days are slower than others, when I have to stop 10 times to pick up sippy cups that get dropped, but that's okay, we love staying fit," laughs Corey, who recently broke 20 minutes in a 5km personal record.

Q+A MUM'S Q&A

I want to improve my upper-body strength so I can carry my baby. What exercises will do this best after my pregnancy?

The key to being strong post-partum is continuing to exercise before, during and after pregnancy. Prior to having your baby, do easy upper-body toning exercises – these can include push-ups against the wall, arm curls and arm extensions (dips off a chair). Walking while swinging the arms is another great exercise. Post-delivery, one of the best ways to strengthen your upper body will be carrying your new baby in your arms or in a wrap/baby carrier. If you're looking for more cardio, get out the jogging stroller and go for a walk. As your baby grows and gets heavier, your workout load will become greater and your strength will improve. Check with your doctor when making changes to your pre- or post-baby workout routine.

Corry Matthews is a certified pre/postnatal exercise and nutrition consultant and has a master's degree in sports medicine.

Get hooked up

Keep your focus on baby, not on holding your phone, while taking your little one out for a stroller walk. With Texthook, a device that allows you to strap your phone to the handlebars of almost any stroller, you can tap into your phone's Bluetooth technology and go hands-free. Another bonus? No more searching through the baby bag when your Rocky ringtone goes off in public.

PACK AND SNACK

Whether you're packing them soup or veggie slices, your children's meals and snacks will keep their temperature (cold for seven hours, hot for five) until lunchtime with the Vacuum Insulated Food Jar from Thermos. Compact, lightweight and BPA-free, these little containers make clean eating fun, portable and easy.

9 NUTRITION TIP

Grams of protein found in a half cup of cooked lentils. They're also a great source of folate, with 179 micrograms in the same serving size. Mix them with beans for a hearty salad.

TEXT KASIA KUREK MOVE OF THE MONTH PHOTO ROBERT REIFF MODEL KATIE UTER-NORMAND STYLING ELISABETTA ROGIANI HAIR & MAKEUP TERI GROVES COREY PHOTO TANNER BROCK STROLLER COURTESY OF THETEXTHOOK.COM THERMOS COURTESY OF THERMOS.COM

Triceps Kickback

Tone your triceps and cut down on arm jiggle with this dumbbell move.

HOW TO DO IT:

Kneel on a bench with your left knee, supporting your body with your left arm and your right foot flat on the floor. Hold a dumbbell in your right hand, with your upper arm parallel to the floor and your elbow bent to 90 degrees **[A]**. Extend your right arm at the elbow until the dumbbell is straight behind you **[B]**. Return to the starting position and repeat.

REAL MUM REAL FIT

HEATHER ELLIS starts her days at 4:30 am "When my boys get up, I'm usually finishing my morning gym session," says the 39-year-old physical therapist. But when she's not breaking a sweat at home, Heather likes to explore the outdoors with her two sons – Jack, 10, and Max, six. "We hike the trails near our home, as well as in the Adirondacks," she says. In turn, her boys are growing up with an appreciation for both fitness and nature. "Of course, there have been a few stories about shoes getting stuck in the mud or getting lost in the stream," she laughs, but says it all just brings them closer to the environment, and to each other.

MUM'S Q&A

I'm just starting my third trimester. What changes should I be making to my training routine?

As your body enters into the third trimester, it begins to prep for birth. While there is no need to stop working out, changing your workout will help alleviate some of the discomfort associated with the last phase of pregnancy. The hormone relaxin (which aids in opening the hips during birth) also affects all joints, so never stretch to pain or beyond your range of motion. Also, due to the hormone increase and weight of the belly, balance will be off. Avoid exercises on unstable surfaces, wear supportive shoes, and choose lower-impact cardio equipment (walking on a treadmill, elliptical, bike). Additionally, you will feel more tired, similar to the first trimester; this is due to a lack of quality sleep at night. Aim for short naps during the day, if possible, and sleep on your left side to increase blood flow to the uterus. Always check with your healthcare provider about your current routine, and ask if it needs to be modified.

Corry Matthews is a certified pre/postnatal exercise and nutrition consultant and has a master's degree in sports medicine.

NUTRITION TIP

37

Calories in one medium red capsicum.

Red capsicums are also a source of vitamin B6, which may help to relieve nausea during pregnancy. Use them in home-made salsas.

FUN FIRST AID!

Combat scraped knees and bruises without tears with the Medibag first aid kit from me4kidz. Not only does each set come with all the basics you'll need for kid-sized emergencies (from bandages to sting relief pads), it also includes fun 'reward' items, like stickers for brave little ones. The kits also come in a purse-sized version!

TEXT KASIA KUREK MOVE OF THE MONTH PHOTO ROBERT REIFF MODEL KATIE UTER-NORMAND STYLING ELISABETTA ROGIANI HAIR & MAKEUP TERI GROVES HEATHER PHOTO BERKELEY ELLIS SHOE PHOTO COURTESY OF WELLBEING.COM MEDIBAG PHOTO COURTESY OF MEDIBAG RED PEPPER CLOK/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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HURRY, THIS OFFER ENDS 31ST MAR 2015!

Are you truly grateful?

BY GREG DOLMAN

I WOULD LIKE TO TELL YOU A LITTLE BIT ABOUT MY EXPERIENCE OF GRATITUDE, OR LACK THEREOF, AT A CERTAIN POINT IN MY LIFE. I decided to write this article based on recent experiences with not only some client feedback, but also some conversations I've had with people in general. The most common denominator from the conversations is the fact that some people are taking the simple things for granted and not being grateful for what they have got.

My gratitude story starts by going back to just over 11 years ago, which was when I first learnt of my father being diagnosed with mesothelioma, or asbestosis, which is formed in the lungs. This form of cancer is very aggressive and when people are diagnosed with this illness it is only a matter of time before death is imminent. Some have been known to last a few years or more but it really depends on the form of 'medicine' that the patient chooses to take in hope of prolonging their time.

The doctor suggested my father would live another 12 months after the diagnosis. He lasted a painful six months!

My father was a solid, rugged type of man. He was a builder who was very old-school, and because he seemed as strong as a mallee, I often thought he would live for many, many years to come. So when my father informed me of his illness, it came as a big shock that someone who seemed so physically strong could become so sick.

The really sad part about mesothelioma is the fact that once we breathe in asbestos particles, they can lay dormant in our system for 30 to 40 years without any signs that it's in our body.

At that point in my life I was hitting the gym pretty hard and was literally taking my life, and health, for granted. When I was doing any exercise at the gym, I would be setting myself a goal of what weight and repetitions I needed to do to satisfy my ego. I was doing what I wanted, not what I needed. If I didn't do what I had set myself to do, I would very hard on myself, which led to how I determined what was a 'good' or 'great' gym session.

Now, there is nothing wrong with setting a certain exercise goal, but what is an issue is the fact that not all goals can be met

PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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straight away, giving the individual something to work toward in future workouts. What the body WANTS and NEEDS, though, are certainly two different things.

At one of my visits to my father in hospital, he said to me,

"You have a bucket load of health and you shouldn't take it for granted!"

What an absolute slap in the face that comment was – and still is. This statement actually made me stop and think about what I WAS taking for granted and what I wasn't. When I really thought about it, I wasn't appreciating the true gift of health at all.

That same day, I was gifted a few other experiences of how ungrateful I was, and had been. I assisted my father into a wheelchair and pushed him outside to sit in the broken sunlight under a tree. It was here I met and spoke with other cancer patients who were either my age or younger. My priorities, or lack thereof, were sorted out pretty quickly when I spoke to people who had weeks, if not days, left to live. Talking to these incredible people forced me to rethink my attitude toward life and made me realise I needed to change, and change rather quickly.

I had to assist my father to get out of bed, go to the bathroom, get comfortable in bed and move out of his hospital room. Without the assistance of another person, my father was bedridden – for my whole life I had been taking for granted the fact I could simply get out of bed.

Not only was I not grateful for having the health and energy to get out of bed, I was not grateful for the fact I could go to the gym and spend some of that precious energy. From that point on, my life and attitude toward life changed completely.

I started to appreciate the simple things that surrounded me and the small things I was able to do each day. My workouts became so much more enjoyable, purely because I wasn't putting any pressure on myself – I was simply appreciating what my body could do. I found that without my ego having a say, my workouts were transformed into not just great workouts, but sensational ones. Both of which added results on both emotional and physical levels.

I then started to use my 'newfound' gratitude in other areas of my life. My social life copped a much-needed cleanup of who I was grateful for having in my life, and vice versa. From here I chose to have a cleanout of deadwood.

IN SIMPLE TERMS, IF I HAD PEOPLE IN MY LIFE WHO WEREN'T BRINGING ME QUALITY EXPERIENCES, THEN I CLASSED THEM AS 'DEADWOOD'. THERE IS NO ROOM FOR DEADWOOD, SO THANKS FOR THE RIDE BUT IT'S TIME FOR ME TO MOVE FORWARD.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Start being grateful emotionally and physically today:

1. Consume at least two litres of water daily – more if you are doing high-intensity exercise;
2. Breathe fresh air – when possible, get out of air-conditioned offices for a break during the day;
3. Eat the right foods – make better food choices and be aware of what your body needs;
4. Move the body – performing a minimum of 30 minutes walking a day works wonders;
5. Rest the body – try a combination of a good night's sleep and resting without sleep (meditation);
6. Get some vitamin D from the sun – I'm not talking about baking here, just get out in the sun for a short period and enjoy those rays; and
7. Cherish your loving relationships.

Too many people carry far too much deadwood around in their lives and this slows them down. Worse – it can slow their personal growth. When it comes to personal growth, we need to have positive people around us that will not only support us on our journey, but pick us up if we fall and assist us with our life's lessons.

When we stress, are we stressing over things that just aren't worth stressing about?

If we have a personal scale of gratitude of what is really important to us then we will find that a lot of our stressful situations really aren't that stressful at all. For example, is the thing we are stressing about affecting, or going to, affect our health? If we have our health, everything else should be manageable.

We have all had experiences where when we are sick and we tend to forget about what we were in fact stressing about, purely because our health becomes number one. Doesn't this prove that we need to truly be grateful for our health?

If the above resonates with you, then maybe it's time for you to take a review of your life and what you're truly grateful for? We need to not only be grateful for our health, but the health of our loved ones. Appreciate the people you have around you and fully enjoy their presence. If you have others around you that you really don't enjoy the company of, keep them at arm's length if you can. Sometimes family members can fall into this category but because they're 'family' we put up with it.

Taking stock of many areas of your life and what you would miss if it were taken away is a good place to start on your gratitude list. On my father's death bed, he only talked about the simple things that he missed – all the things that just about every one of us take for granted.

We need to be grateful for not only our health but also what our body allows us to do, so on top of showing gratitude on an emotional level, show some gratitude toward our body on a physical level as well – your future self with thank you for it.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

GREG DOLMAN

Greg's interest in sports started from an early age. He was blessed to grow up in an area where he had access to a variety of activities on water and on land. Greg's interest in rowing led him to the gym, where he found his passion for lifting weights. He became so good at what he was doing that other gym members started to approach him to assist them with their personal goals. This led Greg into the bodybuilding scene as he helped his gym buddies through the gym-to-stage process.
After studying a basic kinesiology course and completing a number of healing courses, Greg's interest in the workings of the human body turned towards the effect of emotions on the different levels of the body's energy systems. As he worked through his own emotional and physical challenges, Greg gained many first-hand lessons that he then used to help clients overcome their own challenges by understanding the body-mind connection.

Natural Plant-based Pre-workout formula!

Alkaline "Greens PLUS" has an improved taste!!

Added ingredients Taurine, Beta Alanine, Creatine and Arginine noticeably boosts energy levels! It's a must try!

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- ☑ Suitable For Vegans – NO Animal And NO Dairy Products

Alkaline SuperFoods

www.AlkalineSuperfoods.com.au

The Ultimate Pre-Workout Combo

BY **PAULO FREITAG**

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

ARE YOU WONDERING HOW TO CUT THROUGH THE PRE-WORKOUT HYPE AND FIND WHAT YOU REALLY NEED TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR WORKOUTS? We have put together a list of the 'ultimate' pre-workout ingredients to help you sort the trivial from the vital and take your workouts to a higher level.

A good pre-workout formula can boost your energy, up your game and enhance your pump in the gym or on the sporting field. However, with so many products on the market today, knowing what your body's needs before a workout can be hard work.

Pre-workouts are designed to maximise physical performance and endurance. Packed with energy-boosting and protein recovery agents, they are designed to feed your muscles for an intense workout. That's the upside.

The downside: supplement manufacturers often combine headline-making ingredients into one 'super formula' that reads impressive on the label, but it may be a little too aggressive for your liver and digestive system. Over-stressing your vital organs just to produce a temporary energy boost is a short-term strategy and does nothing for overall wellness.

Confused? That's why we have researched the ultimate products, so you know what to look for when looking to give your workouts a boost.

The ultimate pre-workout ingredients:

» **CREATINE** is the superstar of sports and bodybuilding supplements. It improves endurance and performance enabling you to workout harder and longer. It increases the energy available to your body cells, so your cells can endure greater exercise stress while reducing your exhaustion rate. Research shows that up to 95 per cent of your body's creatine supply is in your skeletal muscle tissue. However, caffeine could negate the positive ergogenic effect of creatine in your body so think twice before mixing them together.

» **TAURINE** plays a significant role in human biology. It is a critical amino acid that helps to increase muscle strength and endurance. Taurine is one of the most abundant free amino acids in skeletal muscles and the heart. One of its core benefits is that it helps increase the heart's pumping force, without increasing the heart rate or blood pressure. Under a strenuous workout, taurine synthesis in the body may be impaired, thus the need for supplementation. Vegans have lower concentrations of taurine in plasma and red blood cells than their non-vegan counterparts.

» **BETA ALANINE** may help you crash through pain thresholds by reducing lactic acid build-up, effectively helping you perform more sets and reps. Research shows that combining creatine with beta-alanine enhances its hypertrophy-boosting effect. Converted into a substance known as 'carnosine', beta-alanine may also increase the growth, strength and endurance of muscles. It also helps stave off lactic acid so you can workout harder for longer. Research shows that subjects who took beta-alanine together with creatine gained more muscle mass and lost more body fat than their counterparts who took creatine alone.

» **ARGININE** improves blood circulation, optimises muscle metabolism and increases exercise tolerance. Research points to anabolic (muscle building) properties of arginine, which is reported to increase protein synthesis, reduce muscle breakdown, elevate growth hormone levels and increase nitric oxide (NO) production. NO allows more blood flow to muscles, delivering with it more fuel in the form of carbs, fat, amino acids and oxygen. Arginine also increases growth hormone (GH) levels. GH causes the release of more fat from fat cells during exercise, burning more fat for fuel. This spares muscle glycogen, which leads to longer endurance.

» **GREEN SUPERFOODS.** Surprised? Well, during extensive physical training, glycogen (sugar in the muscles) is burned for energy. Lactic acid and pyruvic acid are just some of the by-products. These acids alter the pH of the muscle tissue which functions best with a slightly alkaline pH. As a result, the muscle contraction mechanism gets impaired leading to physical fatigue and muscle exhaustion. Most pre-workouts don't address the acid issue. A good pre-workout should prime your body to handle the acid load. That's where adding greens to your supplement can make a difference. With greens like alfalfa, barley grass and wheatgrass you may be able to increase exercise performance and also speed up recovery after workout. Go for certified organic and GMO-free brands.

PAULO FREITAG

Paulo Freitag is a multi-award-winning athlete and bodybuilder as well as a sports nutritionist. Known as The Alkaline Guy, he is Australia's leading pioneer in peak performance and alkaline nutrition. At just 18 years of age, he won a scholarship to the US for his javelin throwing, and he eventually competed in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. He attended Life University in Atlanta Georgia, USA, studying sports nutrition while running his successful e-commerce company. After losing his wife to cancer, Paulo dedicated the rest of his life to helping people around the world enjoy a healthier, more vibrant existence. Paulo believes that correcting the acid/alkaline balance of the body can hasten recovery from illness or injury, increase physical vitality and stamina, and improve health, emotional well-being and exercise performance. That's why he encourages people to alkalise and energise! Paulo continues to research and create breakthroughs in health and peak performance products with the goal to assist ordinary people and sports athletes to achieve optimal health and performance at any age.

PHOTO CREDIT: NATALIE V

YOUR BODY NEEDS REAL 'MUSCLE FOOD' NOT EMPTY STIMULANTS!

Most stimulant-laden pre-workouts can lead to adrenal fatigue in the long run. An over-stimulated body is an active body – all this can lead to sleep problems, and if you can't sleep, you can't grow and quickly recover. What you need is a pre-workout formula that increases training intensity, strength and endurance, and helps your body combat the acid load. That's why adding greens to your pre-workout should up your game and improve your recovery and performance. Greens can also help your body buffer acidosis in the muscles, resulting in greater strength, endurance and results during workouts. Just like a good workout, once you listen to your body and get your supplements right, the results can be extraordinary.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Superset for SHAPELY

PHOTOS BY **DALLAS OLSEN** | MODEL: **ILDIKO BROWNING** | HAIR AND MAKE-UP BY **SUE MCLAURIN**

TO FIGHT WEIGHT-ROOM BOREDOM, WE'VE DECIDED TO RAMP UP THESE FOUR STAPLE SHOULDER MOVES TO GET YOUR SHOULDERS SCORCHING WITH REAL RESULTS. NOT ONLY WILL EACH SUPERSET HIT ALL THREE HEADS OF YOUR DELTOIDS – ANTERIOR, POSTERIOR AND LATERAL – BUT THEY WILL CREATE EYE-CATCHING SHAPE TO YOUR SHOULDER CAP.

WHAT IS A SUPERSET?

A superset is when you perform two exercises back-to-back without resting until a set for both of the exercises has been completed. Supersets can be used to increase the intensity of your workouts and shock your working muscles into getting stronger. This is due to the increased volume, whereby you force your muscles to break down and repair stronger for the next time you step into the gym.

FINDING BALANCE

Three out of the four of these moves require you to perform them standing. This will engage your core as well as your legs, creating better strength, balance and flexibility throughout your entire body.

YOUR SUPERSET PROGRAM

Do each superset workout once per week – that means you'll be working your deltoids twice as hard within seven days. Always leave more than 48 hours between this workout to ensure you don't overtrain your shoulders. Be diligent and your shoulders will be looking super in as little as four short weeks!

Shock your shoulders with our sizzling superset program.

SHOULDERS

SUPERSET #1:

Perform 12 reps for each move, one after the other. Rest for 45 seconds, and repeat. Do this three times.

1. Front raise

TARGET MUSCLES: anterior deltoids

Set-up: Stand with your feet together and the dumbbells held in front of you in an overhand grip **[A]**.

Action: Keeping your arms and back straight, and your abs contracted, raise the dumbbells up to shoulder level **[B]**. Pause momentarily and return to the start position.

TIP: A slight bend in the knees will help you keep your balance but will prevent you from using momentum.

2. Seated Dumbbell Arc

TARGET MUSCLES: posterior, anterior and lateral deltoids

Set-up: Sit on a bench holding the dumbbells at your sides. Lean forward until your chest is almost resting on your thighs with the dumbbells below your knees **[A]**.

Action: As you raise the dumbbells, sit up until your back is straight **[B]**. At the same time, raise the dumbbells overhead **[C]**. Lower to the start position and repeat.

TIP: Use a slow and controlled motion as you rotate.

When you have completed all three sets of the first supersets, perform 30 seconds of jump squats before resting for 30 seconds and moving on to the second superset phase.

SUPERSET #2: *Perform 12 reps for each move, one after the other. Rest for 45 seconds, and repeat. Do this three times.*

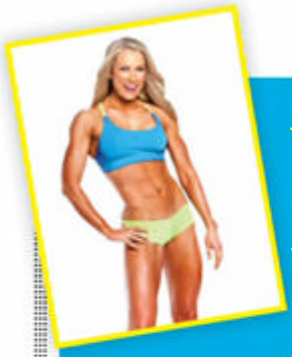
1. Shoulder press

TARGET MUSCLES: anterior and lateral deltoids

Set-up: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Hold a dumbbell in each hand with an overhand grip. Raise your arms until the dumbbells are at shoulder height, upper arms parallel to the floor **[A]**.

Action: Keeping your abs contracted press the dumbbells up as you extend your arms **[B]**.

TIP: Don't cheat your reps! Make sure that the 90-degree angle you started with is how you finish.



Expert Tip

Many people are actually unaware there are three muscles that make up the shoulder. Chances are your training is targeting one or two of these areas well but not specifically targeting any one of these in isolation. This may lead to a weaker less defined muscle so ensure you train all three equally. The best exercise to target all three heads of the shoulder is scarecrows.

FOR A SCARECROW DEMO SCAN ABOVE

2. Reverse flye

TARGET MUSCLES: posterior deltoids

Set-up: Stand with your hip-width apart and dumbbells held in front of your body. Keeping your abs contracted and back straight, lean forward slightly **[A]**.

Action: Leading with your elbows, raise the dumbbells to shoulder level or slightly lower **[B]**.

TIP: For an advanced lifter and to really hit your delts, hinge forward more so your torso is in line with the floor.

ILDIKO BROWNING

Ildiko Browning has more than 12 years experience in the fitness industry. From her first sports model competition at the age of 23 to appearing on stage again 10 years later, Ildiko says her best is yet to come. A love of people and a passion for sharing her enthusiasm for fitness led Ildiko to begin her personal Training business 'ildifit Personal Training' a year and a half ago. She is currently putting her competition and business aspirations on hold while she raises her four-and-a-half-month-old twins.

Based in Melbourne, Ildiko has attended many workshops and seminars over the years, and intends to further her studies to steer the direction of her business towards assisting woman, particularly mums, in attaining a healthier lifestyle.

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MOST OF US HAVE HEARD THE TERM 'FOOD IS MEDICINE'. **HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED HOW HERBS AND SPICES CAN BENEFIT OUR OVERALL HEALTH** AND PLAY A ROLE IN THE PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF DISEASE? WELL, WONDER NO MORE.

The Healing Properties of Herbs

CULINARY HERBS AND SPICES ARE SIMPLY LEAFY PLANTS THAT ADD FLAVOUR AND COLOUR TO FOODS. BUT THEIR MEDICINAL VALUE IS MOST INTERESTING TO HEALTH. STUDIES SHOW THE HEALING PROPERTIES OF HERBS AND SPICES CAN PREVENT AND MANAGE SEVERAL CONDITIONS INCLUDING TYPE 2 DIABETES, HEART DISEASE, ARTHRITIS AND POLYCYSTIC OVARIAN SYNDROME.

Their powerful antioxidant, anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory properties aid in the treatment of indigestion, nausea, colds and flu, healthy circulation and also provide the body with an array of essential vitamins and minerals. BY CAITLIN BURNETT

PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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Throw away the sauces, sugar, salt and dressings! Herbs and spices are great for your health and they also add flavour and aroma to any meal – simply and without fuss.

So, next time you're cooking up a storm try experimenting with these:

CINNAMON has been shown to improve glucose homeostasis and insulin sensitivity (balancing blood sugar levels) and may be effective for people with Type 2 diabetes, metabolic syndrome, polycystic ovarian syndrome and non-alcoholic fatty liver disease. Cinnamon has powerful anti-inflammatory effects due to the bio active compounds cinnamic acid, cinnamaldehyde, ethyl cinnamate and chalcones. A little tip when buying cinnamon: choose 'cinnamon ceylon' rather than 'cinnamon cassia', as studies show ceylon has greater effect on balancing blood sugars. Add to porridge, yoghurt, smoothies and sweet potato.

ORAGANO contains high amounts of antioxidants as well as powerful antibacterial properties due to the active compound called carvacol. Oregano also has an anti-inflammatory action due to its active compound beta-caryophyllene, making it useful for the prevention and treatment of inflammatory conditions such as osteoporosis, muscle pain, bronchitis, headaches and menstrual cramps.

GINGER is well known for the treatment of stomach upsets. In addition, it contains anti-inflammatory compounds such as gingerols and zingerone so it's valuable in the management of arthritis, muscle soreness, menstrual pain, headaches, upper respiratory tract infections and elevated cholesterol. The warming effects also stimulate circulation, which promotes blood flow and reduces oedema. Add fresh ginger to smoothies, soups, stir-fries and homemade dressings.

GARLIC is used medicinally to reduce risks associated with high blood pressure and elevated cholesterol. It is also known for its antimicrobial properties (ability to fight off bacterial and fungal infections), due to its active component, allicin. Add fresh garlic to almost any dish, especially slow-cooked dishes.

ROSEMARY contains the antioxidant rosmarinic acid, which has powerful anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic, anti-fungal and anti-septic properties. Rosemary improves circulation and is rich in B vitamins, vitamin A and C as well as a rich source of minerals such as potassium, calcium and iron. Rosemary makes a great addition to soups, veggies and seasoning on meats, fish and poultry.

CLOVE contains high amounts of antioxidants. Its healing properties include anti-septic, local anaesthetic and anti-inflammatory activity. The active components in clove have also been shown to increase gut motility, relieving indigestion and constipation via increasing digestive enzyme secretions. Use cloves whole to flavour dishes and then remove before eating. Alternatively, ground the clove just before use and add to the dish last-minute to obtain maximum benefits from the oils.

CHILLI contains primary compounds called 'capsaicinoids', which make it a great anti-inflammatory spice with known healing benefits for metabolic syndrome and gastric infections such as H. pylori. As an added bonus, chilli also promotes thermogenesis (fat burning) and can be used in just about any dish to spice it up.

Whether you are looking to balance your blood sugar levels, reduce inflammation, increase your antioxidant status, or simply add a little spice to your life, culinary use of herbs and spices on a daily basis is a simple and effective way to promote optimal health by using food as medicine. So why not start incorporating them into your diet today?

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

CAITLIN BURNETT

Caitlin is a Melbourne-based accredited nutritionist and the founder and practitioner of Into Nutrition. Caitlin enjoys all aspects of nutrition and is particularly passionate about sports nutrition. She also has a keen interest in gastrointestinal disorders, female hormonal disorders and weight management.

Caitlin found her love for health and fitness when she began implementing clean eating and weight training into her routine. The positive results she obtained then led her to finishing a Bachelor of Science in Nutritional Medicine and opening her own business.

Caitlin is passionate about preventative health and truly believes that good nutrition and physical activity can help you lead a healthier, happier life. She believes in a holistic approach and enjoys helping her clients to optimise their nutrition and health as well as sharing practical, evidence-based advice.

Visit www.intonutrition.com.au for more information.

PHOTO CREDIT MICHAEL BREWER

"Let food be thy medicine and let thy medicine be food"

PART 2

– Hippocrates

BY SHELLY DHALIWAL

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

HIPPOCRATES, ONE OF THE FOUNDING FATHERS OF MEDICINE, OFFERS THE ULTIMATE SOLUTION TO HEALTH IN THE SIMPLE QUOTE ABOVE. ***His insights are on par with the Eastern philosophies, including the ancient Indian medicine system Ayurveda, the traditional Chinese medicine, and also the beliefs of shamans and native communities in Central and South America. They all agree on one core principle:***

What we eat either builds us or kills us – there is no in-between.

The best part here is that instead of feeling helpless because of our genetics or environment, we can actually improve our wellbeing by taking an active control of it. We just need the right information. This article is a beginning point and I encourage you to follow-up with your own research.

PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

So, let's first look at the **TOP FOUR FOODS WE MUST ELIMINATE** from our diet and why:

1. **MONOSODIUM GLUTAMATE (MSG) OR ITS COUNTLESS DERIVATIVES (PLEASE GOOGLE):** MSG is a flavour-enhancer that makes food taste and smell better. It is found in almost all packaged and prepared foods. MSG has no nutritional benefits. Research indicates it works by over-exciting our nervous system and tricking our brain into 'liking' what we eat. In doing so, MSG causes side effects such as headaches, numbness, chest pains and nausea. Research further indicates that different people have different levels of sensitivity to MSG and it builds up in our system to causes long-term damage.

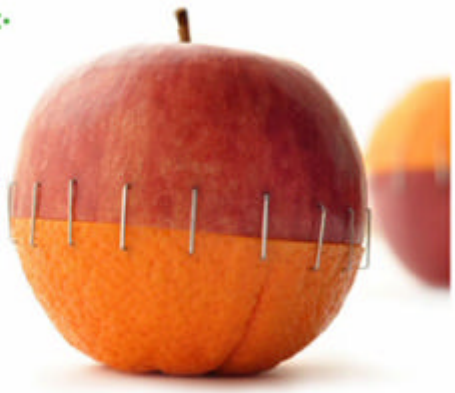
2. **GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS (GM FOODS):** These foods have had their DNA changed through genetic manipulation and/or engineering. Monsanto Company, the mastermind behind this, wanted to modify foods to make them pest-resistant and longer-lasting. However, research indicates that the side effects of GM foods include weak immune system, nutrient deficiencies, infertility and even cancer. In 2001, Australia mandated that all GM foods should be labelled so consumers have a choice. But the labelling does not extend to GM-derived refined products, additives, preservatives, artificial flavours, animal products, and restaurant or takeaway meals. Most common GM foods to avoid are corn, soy, aspartame (artificial sweetener), sugar beets and canola.

3. **THE WHITES - SUGAR, SALT, FLOUR, RICE OR PASTA:** The main issue with the whites when compared to their raw or wholemeal counterparts is that they are bleached. This makes them shinier, smoother and hence appealing, but it also strips their nutrients. What's more, the whites are highly processed and refined, which can affect their composition and make them GM without that actual intention.

4. **ENERGY DRINKS:** These are toxic cocktails of excessive sugars, salts, caffeine and other stimulants designed to boost our energy levels. Research indicates that people experience severe side effects such as sweating, rapid heart rate, paranoia and even heart attacks, following short- and long-term consumption of these.

These four have invaded our shelves because of our hectic lives, but eliminating them is easy if we follow these three principles:

1. If you cannot pronounce the ingredients on the packaging (most likely MSG or its many derivatives), do not buy the product;
2. Avoid fruits and vegetables that do not look their 'normal' self. They could very well be GM; and
3. Buy only in-season fruits and vegetables. They will be fresher, cheaper and free from preservatives.



THERE IS ALSO THE FOURTH PRINCIPLE, WHICH IS RECOGNISING WHICH DELICIOUS FOODS TO INCLUDE THAT WILL HELP TO BOOST OUR IMMUNITY. LET'S START OUR DISCUSSION WITH MY TOP FIVE:

1. GINGER AND GARLIC: Highly renowned in the Eastern medicine for their anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and anti-parasitic properties because they flush toxins out of our system. Research further supports these benefits and recommends a diet rich in both. Ginger can also be added to teas to aid better digestion and relieve anxiety.

2. LEMON, LIME, ORANGES AND GREEN TEA: The citrus fruits are high in vitamin C, calcium, potassium and pectin fibre. Beginning the day by drinking water with lemon can kick-start digestion, help to eliminate toxins and restore the acid-alkaline balance. Also, research indicates that citrus enhances the healing properties of green tea six-fold as catechins (flavanol antioxidants) in green tea prefer an acidic environment for full absorption in our body. Green tea citrus also can help with gradual weight loss without putting stress on our body, and make our skin younger and smoother by fighting free radicals from inside.

3. TURMERIC/CURCUMIN, CAYENNE PEPPER AND CLOVE SPICES: Turmeric, one of the key ingredients in Indian curries, is the master-healing spice in Ayurveda. Research supports that it is an anti-inflammatory, an antioxidant and can reduce the risks of cancer, heart disease and Alzheimer's. Cayenne pepper dilates blood vessels and enhances blood flow, it also speeds up metabolism and helps to flush out toxins from our body, which then assists with natural weight loss. Cloves help with digestion, toothaches, headaches and getting rid of parasites. Coriander and parsley also offer similar benefits while making food taste and smell fresher.

4. COCONUT OIL: This recently popular oil has strong anti-inflammatory, anti-bacterial, anti-viral and anti-parasitic properties. Unlike trans-fats in most oils that cause lethargy, depression and heart issues, coconut oil has medium-chain fatty acids that are easier for our body to digest. It also has a high smoking point (177°C), which means it does not change composition during cooking, as many oils do.

5. AND OF COURSE, A BIT OF INDULGENCE WITH RED WINE AND DARK CHOCOLATE. Both are proved to have powerful antioxidants, which reduce the risk of heart diseases while giving amazing benefits to our skin.

Please consider your allergies when incorporating any of these in your diet.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

The foods on the left, not only enhance the flavours in cooking and hence eliminate the need for MSG and other artificial products. They also offer medicinal benefits that strengthen our immunity, boost our energy and help fight signs of ageing.

In fact, a popular Ayurveda DIY beauty mask that helps fade pigmentation and fights premature ageing is:

- ☐ 2 tsp turmeric powder
- ☐ A squeeze of lemon
- ☐ 2-3 drops of coconut oil (skip this if you are acne-prone)
- ☐ Milk or water to bind

Apply to face/affected areas for 30 minutes every week. Turmeric is highly pigmented and can leave your skin slightly yellowish afterwards, so apply only when staying in for the day/evening.

Before I close, I want to share with you this Hieroglyph quote from an ancient Egyptian tomb, which translates to:

One-quarter of what you eat keeps you alive.

The other three-quarters keeps your doctor alive.

I'd rather keep myself alive and put the savings towards my own indulgence; a Caribbean holiday perhaps? What would you rather?

SHELLY DHALIWAL

Shelly Dhaliwal is of Indian background and her grandparents raised her with the principles of Ayurveda – the ancient Indian medicine system. She then trained as a scientist in some of the leading universities in Australia and New Zealand. Her research interests included the body's immune and defence system. To gain a deeper understanding of how our body heals itself, Shelly spent extensive time with shamans and native communities in the jungles of Central and South America. This helped her to fully integrate her scientific background with her intuitive awareness. Currently, she has a successful practice as a health and life coach, and intuitive healer with clients in New York, California, Australia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Costa Rica. She also has a regular spot on Psychic TV, a live TV show which features only the best psychics and clairvoyants in Australia. For more information, please visit her website **www.shellydhaliwal.com**

CHANGING **LIVES**

PERSONAL TRAINER AND COVER GIRL, DANIELLE APPI RUNS SUCCESSFUL BOOT CAMPS ON THE GOLD COAST WITH A GREAT COMMUNITY OF WOMEN. HER GREATEST JOY IS SEEING THESE WOMEN TRANSFORM, BUT THERE'S ONE THING MISSING.

Danielle's Cover Girl Diet

BREAKFAST Omelette with green veggies such as zucchini, asparagus and/or spinach

MID-MORNING Greek yoghurt, blueberries and a handful of nuts

LUNCH Large salad or plate of green vegetables with chicken

MID-AFTERNOON Rice cakes with nut butter and vegetable sticks with hummus

DINNER Lean meat with salad or vegetables

SNACK Liquorice tea with a few macadamias or a few squares of dark chocolate

"Get into the habit of having food prep days to avoid last-minute convenience foods."

CAREER IN FITNESS

After I had two children in my early 30s, I was much heavier and unhealthier than I'd ever been. I always loved doing group fitness classes, so I joined a gym with a crèche. Before long, I realised I needed to return to work, but decided a nine-to-five desk job was no longer attractive. I wanted to work in an energietic and motivating industry that changes peoples' lives.

BEING A ROLE MODEL

I think it's imperative for a personal trainer to portray a fit and healthy image. Being able to walk the walk as well as talk the talk is paramount. How can I expect commitment, consistency and dedication from my clients if I don't model those traits? A good client/trainer relationship is based on trust and respect. I don't see how a client can respect a trainer who is not living and breathing the lifestyle they are promoting.

FOCUSSING ON NUTRITION

Success is 80 per cent nutrition and 20 per cent training, and I have experienced it firsthand. This year I entered my first figure competition. While my training didn't change during my 15 weeks prep, it was amazing to watch the transformation that took place with 100 per cent dedication to clean nutrition. I didn't starve myself. But I did commit to an extremely healthy and clean diet for the full 15 weeks. I'm now more relaxed about what I eat, yet I still stick to an 80/20 mindset. This means I eat 'cleanly' 80 per cent of the week with a deviation from my clean meals 10 to 20 per cent of the time – for sanity and variety.

INSPIRING OTHERS

During my career as a personal trainer, I have realised that for many the will to succeed is strong, but they lack knowledge about the specific steps to success. Much available information is conflicting, so people are confused and frustrated about their options. Currently, I can advise my clients only on general nutrition guidelines. I've recently enrolled in the new Nutrition Coach course at The Australian Institute of Fitness. The Institute's certification will allow me to consolidate my nutritional knowledge and enable me to coach clients in behavioural and motivational strategies in nutrition which will empower them to make great nutrition choices. I'm excited to share this knowledge with my clients and to see how a more holistic service will result in longer term, permanent changes to their lifestyle and bodies.

To learn more about the Nutrition Coach course at the Australian Institute of Fitness, call 1300 669 669 or visit fitness.edu.au

PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

When you got started you just couldn't stop

BY **JOANNE PRIOR**

You look in the mirror and you like what you see; you always wanted to be thin. Now you've triumphed! Goal achieved. But others don't seem to be as happy as you are with your new look. Quite the contrary, actually; everyone is asking you if you are 'okay'. You don't understand why this is happening – you think you look great. It's demoralising when you've achieved a goal and those around you don't share your joy, especially when your dream had always been to have a body that was thin; where you don't have 'saddlebags', you have space between the top of your thighs and a muffin top doesn't exist.

It was a dream you'd always had but had never realised – until now.

It first started with cutting down on your serving sizes and exercising a bit more. It took a few weeks for the weight to start coming off, but it did. It wasn't until one day that someone at the gym said, "Have you lost weight? You look so much better." That was when you knew the diet and exercise were working.

You were so inspired and motivated to keep going that, in your enthusiasm, you decided to eat even less and up the exercise – your eating and exercise plan had worked up until now, so why not up the ante?

The weight started to fall off just as you had planned. It was exhilarating; the compliments were flowing in from everywhere, "Wow! You've lost so much weight." All of the attention made you feel like a celebrity – you loved it!

Because you loved it, you kept going and going and going. And the kilos kept dropping and dropping and dropping.

Then all of a sudden the compliments stopped. Statements like, "You've gotten skinny", "your arms are very thin", "are you okay?" and "are you unwell?" started to flow thick and fast. But you couldn't understand why. You were the thinnest you had ever been – shouldn't the compliments be increasing in numbers?

It wasn't until one morning you jumped on the scales and they registered at 38kg. Had you really lost 24kg in five months? You were shocked. For the first time in months you knew that you were in trouble. You knew instinctively that if you didn't stop you were going to starve yourself to death.

But you had no idea how to stop. What do you do? Where do you go from here?

Once you have acknowledged that you might have a problem, follow my '5 Steps to Surviving and Thriving':

STEP 1: Talk to someone you trust about your concerns and do some research into finding a professional who can help. Do not try to do this on your own. It is a complex issue that needs expert input to guide you through to a place of wellness and health.

STEP 2: The first port of call would be a good GP that you can trust and is well versed in dealing effectively and efficiently with your concerns. Your GP can then organise a team of health professionals to work in conjunction with each other to ensure you get all the support you need, not just physically, but mentally and emotionally.

STEP 3: Be patient with yourself and the process of getting well. It took a while to get to the epitome of poor health so it will take a while to build yourself back up.

STEP 4: Don't give up. You'll have some tough days where the struggle to not eat will seem overpowering, but stick to your guns and you will get through it.

STEP 5: Get as much support as you can through your network of family and friends. They will have been so worried about you, so they will be more than happy now to do what they can to make the healing process a more simple and easy one.

You will get well. It will take time, determination, persistence and commitment. But you have already shown you have these qualities in bundles. Health and wellness, here you come!

ABOUT JO
Joanne is a specialist who will help you truly understand how to think and how eat in order to achieve the greatest weight loss you're capable of. Find out more or contact Joanne via **www.joanneprior.com**

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

SUPPLEMENTS // REVIEW

USN XÉDRA-CUT ULTRA XT

USN recently launched their bigger, value-for-money Xédra-Cut ULTRA XT 120s, complementing the 60s that are already available on shelf. This international market-leading, thermogenic formula contains the most up-to-date and scientifically-supported ingredients, which have been shown to support fat oxidisation, suppress your appetite and cravings, and enhance your metabolism. Get in shape now with USN.

Available exclusively through Chemist Warehouse outlets nationwide.
RRP - $29.99 (60s) $59.99 (120s)

For more information, visit http://www.usn.com.au/

THE NAKED CO

The Naked Co Whey Protein Isolate is produced from New Zealand grass-fed dairy cows – free from growth hormones and other nasties. It is cold-processed creating an un-denatured, high -quality, easily digestible protein with an unmatched amino acid profile compared to others on the market.

No more than two organic ingredients are added to any of their three WPI products: cinnamon from India, vanilla beans from Madagascar and raw cacao from Peru. Each flavour is complimented with a small amount of stevia and tastes great with water, added to shakes or included in raw recipes.

Not sure if The Naked Co WPI is for you? Samples are available from www.thenakedco.com.au

MASS NUTRITION

15%OFF IN FEBRUARY

In February 2015, Mass Nutrition is doing something MASSIVE! They are running a fantastic promotion dubbed '15 FOR 15', where you'll get 15% off all stock online and in participating stores.
Mass Nutrition is Australia's destination for the most recognisable and trusted brands within the health industry. Founded in 2007, Mass and Miss Nutrition stocks an extensive range of quality vitamins, supplements and natural health products to suit general health, men's and women's health, pre- and post-workout, fat loss and stress relief.

Use the promo code 'FEB15' online and in participating stores. T&Cs at www.massnutrition.com.au/feb15

ALKALINE SUPERFOODS

Alkaline Greens PLUS Natural Pre-Workout Formula is a unique blend of three of the most powerful pH-friendly green superfoods: alfalfa, barley grass and wheatgrass. These will help to feed your body the correct ration of vitamins, minerals and amino acids during strenuous exercise or endurance events. The added ingredients of taurine, beta alanine, creatine and arginine noticeably boost energy levels without the crash of regular pre-workout formulas. It is a must-try!

Alkaline Greens PLUS is:

- NASAA-certified organic
- An Alkaline food supplement
- Chemical-free, GMO-free and gluten-free
- Australian-grown, Australian-made and Australian-owned
- Easily digestible instant powder
- Free from any artificial flavours or additives
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The secret to Lori Harder's bikini-ready body? High-impact body-weight workouts like this.

BY **THE *OXYGEN* TEAM** | PHOTOGRAPHY **STEWART VOLLAND**

BRING UP THE BURN

WHEN IT COMES TO KEEPING HER FRAME TIGHT AND HER BODY LIMBER, LORI HARDER

– trainer, author and owner of that immaculate six-pack – knows that the gym isn't always the place to be. She believes that right where you are is the best place to work up a sweat.

This series of exercises doesn't rely on anything more than an area large enough for you to jump up and sprawl on the ground. Your intervals should be intense – they start out at 45 seconds in length and gradually decrease with each round, until you are only doing 20 seconds of each exercise.

Tackle this workout three times per week on nonconsecutive days, or whenever you're on the go and need a quick, no-hassle workout – then, watch your body become a stronger, tighter, better-functioning machine in a matter of weeks.

Choose four or five exercises. Follow the directions below for each round of work. (Preset an interval timer, like the Gymboss, to help you keep track.)

ROUND ONE

Do each move for 45 seconds*, and rest 20 seconds in between exercises. Rest for 40 seconds before moving on to Round Two.

ROUND TWO

Do each move for 30 seconds*, and rest 20 seconds in between exercises. Rest for 40 seconds before moving on to Round Three.

ROUND THREE

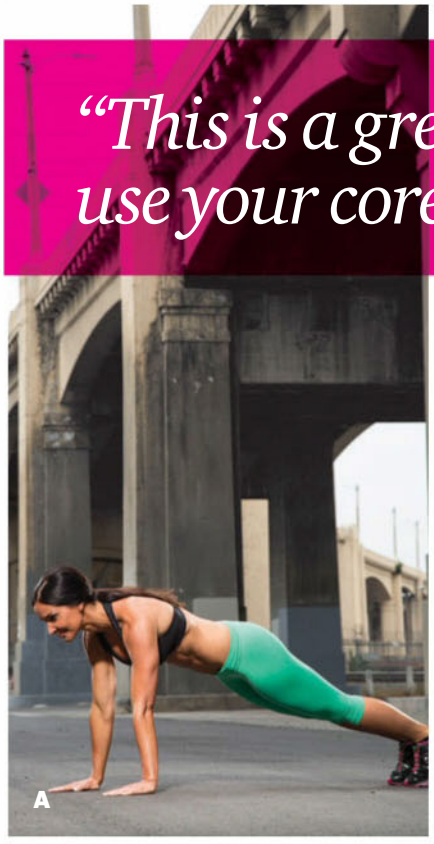
Do each move for 20 seconds without rest.*

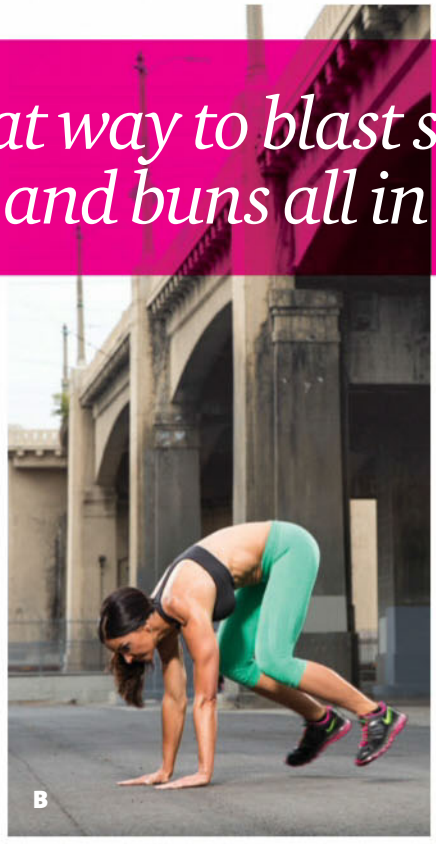
**Repeat on both sides where necessary.*

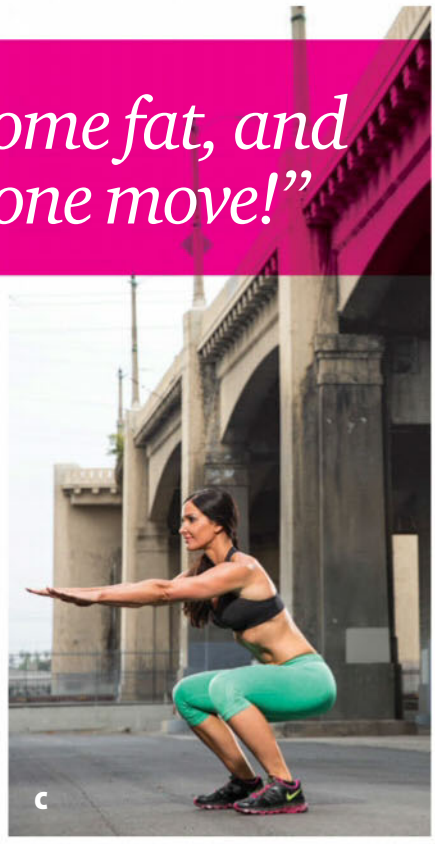
triangle burpee

HOW TO: Stand with your feet hip-width apart. Reach your right hand to the floor, bend your left knee, and jump your right leg out to the side, as if performing a side lunge **[A]**. Jump up and quickly switch leg and hand positions to come into a lunge on your right side. Hop your feet back to centre, place both hands on the ground, then jump your legs behind you to come into a high plank **[B]**. Jump your feet back towards your hands, then stand to complete one rep.

"This is a great way to blast some fat, and use your core and buns all in one move!"



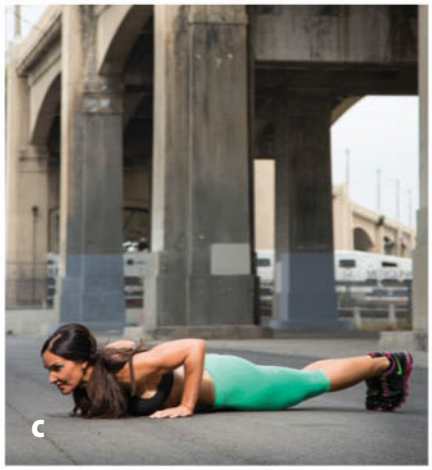




push-up pop-up

"This is the perfect high-intensity move for adding core, shoulder and leg strength."

HOW TO: Start in a high-plank position, with your hands under your shoulders on the ground **[A]**. Jump your feet to beside your hands **[B]**, coming into a low-squat position, then immediately raise your hands straight out in front of you **[C]**. Return your hands to the ground and jump your legs behind you to return to a high plank. Perform a push-up, then repeat from the top.



SQUAT JACK WITH BELLY-DROP PUSH-UP

"I love this move because it makes me feel like a true athlete! The faster you get, the more fat you burn."

HOW TO: Stand with your feet together. Jump your legs wide **[A]** and descend into a squat **[B]**, then jump them back together and stand. Repeat once. Next, place your hands on the ground, jump your legs behind you, and bring your belly right down to the ground. Place your palms on the ground beside your chest **[C]**, then extend your arms to come into a push-up position. Hop your feet back towards your hands, stand, then repeat from the top.

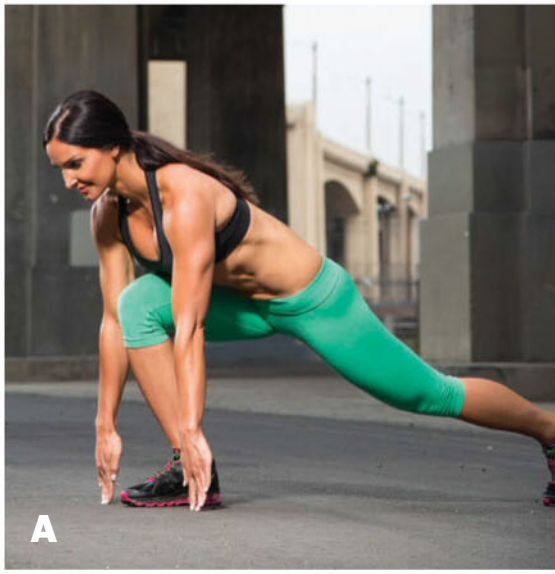
"This move works your abs without crunches!"

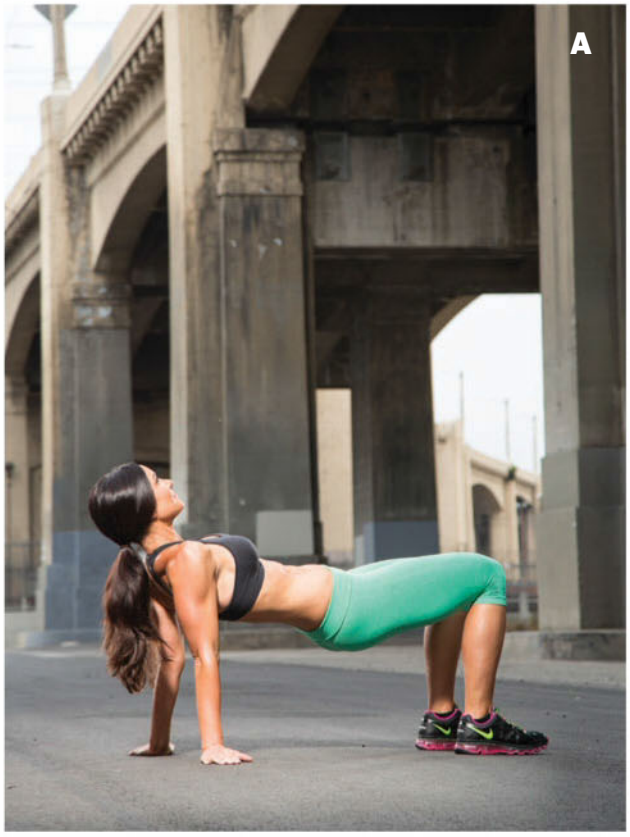
opposite knee to elbow

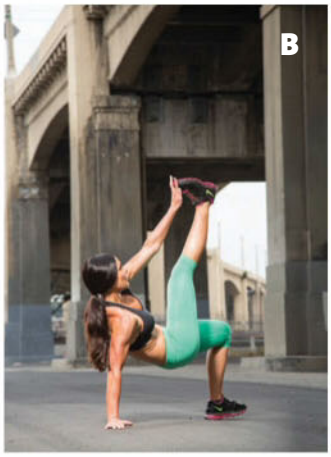
HOW TO: Get into a high-plank position, with your hands just wider than shoulder-width apart. Perform a push-up, extend your arms, then bring your right knee under your body towards your left elbow. Repeat, alternating sides with each rep.

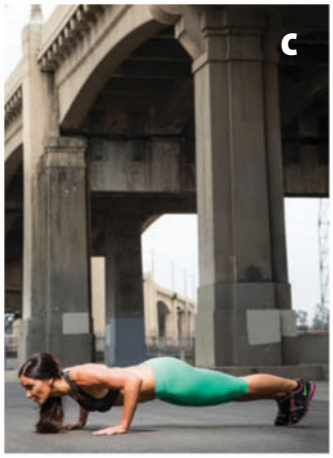
reverse lunge tap with kick

HOW TO: Stand with your feet together. Step your left leg back and bend both knees to lunge; from here, bring your chest forward until it is touching your right thigh, and place your fingertips on the ground **[A]**. Quickly reverse to stand, then immediately kick your right leg forward as high as you can **[B]**. Complete your set, then repeat on your opposite side.









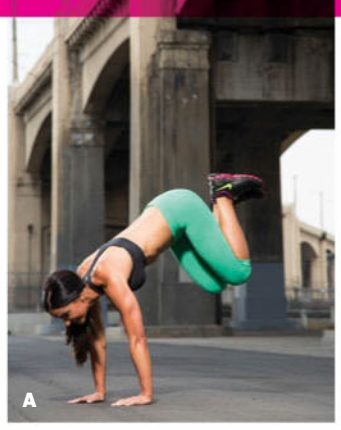
CRAB KICK PUSH-UP

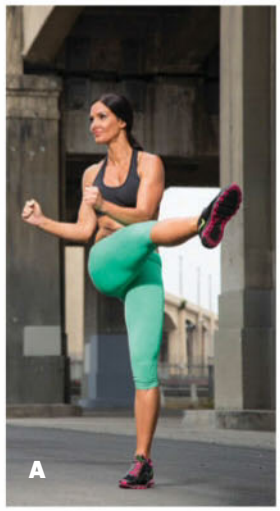
"This one will definitely get every muscle in your body 'thinking!'"

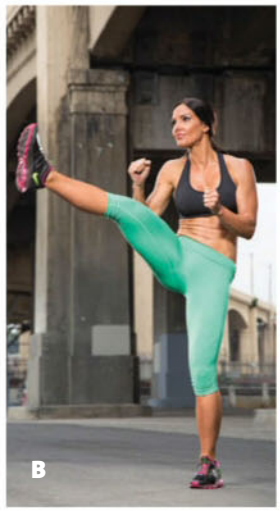
HOW TO: Sit on the ground and press up into a reverse tabletop position; your hands should be under your shoulders and your knees stacked over your ankles **[A]**. Kick your right leg up and reach your left arm across your body to touch your toes **[B]**. Repeat on your opposite side, then flip over into a push-up position and bend your arms **[C]**. Extend, flip back over, and repeat from the top.

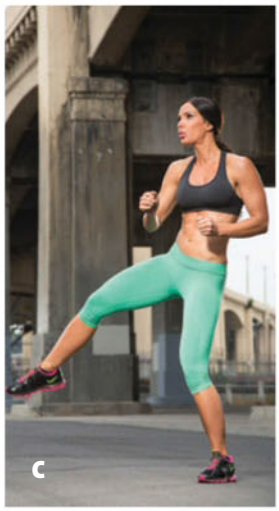
jump-over

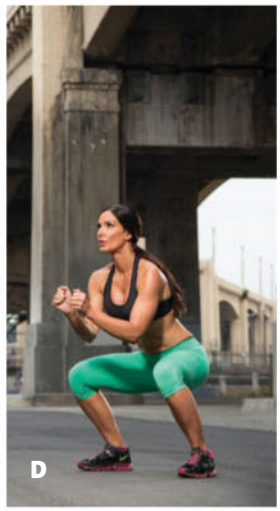
HOW TO: Place your hands and feet on the ground, slightly pointing your tailbone up to create a 'V' with your body, like in the downward dog position. Jump both legs to the right, kicking your butt with your heels in mid-air **[A]** before landing **[B]**. Repeat to the left, and continue rapidly for your set.











ROUNDHOUSE KICK & SQUAT

"This exercise helps you become aware of the fluid motions your body is capable of."

HOW TO: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, and kick your right leg in front of and across your body in a circular motion **[A, B]**. Return your foot back to the start **[C]**, and immediately squat **[D]**. Stand, then go straight into another kick using your left leg. Repeat, alternating sides. ■

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Food for the Soul

BY **AMBER WALKER**

YOU HAVE NO DOUBT HEARD OF 'HOLISTIC TRAINING' – TRAINING WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE WHOLE, RATHER THAN FOCUSING ON SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE BODY – BUT HAVE YOU HEARD OF 'HOLISTIC NUTRITION'?

ENCOMPASSING ALL ELEMENTS OF THE PERSON: SPIRITUALITY, RELATIONSHIPS, CAREER AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, 'HOLISTIC NUTRITION' LOOKS AT MORE THAN JUST A HEALTHY DIET. To many in the industry, these elements are known as 'primary foods' due to their ability to feed a person without nutrients.

We know that humans require more than a nutritious diet to survive, so it makes sense to include an evaluation of these primary foods when looking at prescribing a nutrition plan for someone.

Your secondary food needs, however, are met from the food you ingest. Conventional nutrition involves giving people a nutrition 'plan' and expecting them to follow it. While this can work theoretically, people often find it difficult to stick to the plan or revert to old habits once the plan is finished. For many, it's a chicken or the egg debate. Some people believe if you eat better your life will become more balanced, whilst most of us who practice holistic nutrition believe it to be the other way around.

AMBER WALKER

Amber is a qualified personal trainer and holistic health coach with over 15 years experience in the fitness industry. Amber is currently completing her degree in nutritional medicine after initial studies in biomedical science and exercise physiology. Amber has two children and is a 3x world fitness model champion with the WNBF.

Having suffered severe depression in her early 20s, Amber has a strong interest in wellbeing and working with clients on a holistic level. Encouraging women to live a healthy, active lifestyle is Amber's passion. She believes everyone deserves to live the fullest life possible. For more information, visit **www.amberwalker.com**

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM | AMBER PHOTO CREDIT AUKI HENRY

WHY DO PEOPLE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO STICK TO A NUTRITION PLAN?

The reasons why someone finds it hard to stick to a plan often come down to an imbalance of primary foods, whether it is their spiritual, relationship, career or physical activity element. It could even be a combination of all four.

Take, for example, someone who consistently gives in to ice cream in the evening. This regular occurrence has more to do with their lifestyle and primary foods than their nutritional plan. Most people understand that excessive ice cream is not good for nutrition, but are unsure of why they constantly crave and give in to it.

Look at the primary foods in your life. If you are in an unhappy relationship or are having a bad week at work, you could be compensating with emotional eating. If you address any of your primary food issues, you will have more success adjusting your secondary foods.

WHAT SHOULD A HOLISTIC NUTRITION PLAN LOOK LIKE?

Holistic eating requires you to look at your food on a deeper level than macronutrients. It involves breaking a food down to its cellular level to discover how it will nurture your body and mind as a whole.

Soul-enriching, nutrient-dense food should be consumed wherever possible to reach and maintain optimum holistic health. I believe to do this, it is more important and easier to add food to your diet rather than eliminate it. To create a sustainable and manageable change, aim to add one new food to your diet each week. This can include a new type of green or a superfood. Adding foods that are high in nutritional value allow you to feel positive about the changes you are making instead of feeling deprived due to elimination. If you continue to add soul-enriching foods each week you will eventually crowd out the 'bad' food without even realising it.

SOOTHING THE SOUL

On a spiritual level, it is also worth considering the energetics of food. As with everything on earth, food also contains energetic properties. It makes sense that fresh produce has more energy than processed or aged food. Another simple way to decipher and reap the benefits of the energy of food is to look at how the food grows. When it comes to fruits and vegetables, look at the direction it grows in. Foods that grow toward the sun such as greens, spinach and kale are high in chlorophyll, which is known to oxygenate the blood and improve the mood. On the other end of the scale are root vegetables like carrots and beetroots, which have long been known as comfort foods due to their grounding properties.

Holistic Nutrition Tip

EAT FOOD AS CLOSE TO ITS NATURAL STATE AS POSSIBLE. Don't forget to take into account that holistic nutrition also accounts for the availability of food. Thanks to giant supermarket chains we have forgotten that food is seasonal and most foods are not available in nature all year round.

A good acronym to remember is to eat SLOW. Not only is it good for your digestion, but it also reminds you of how we are designed to eat:

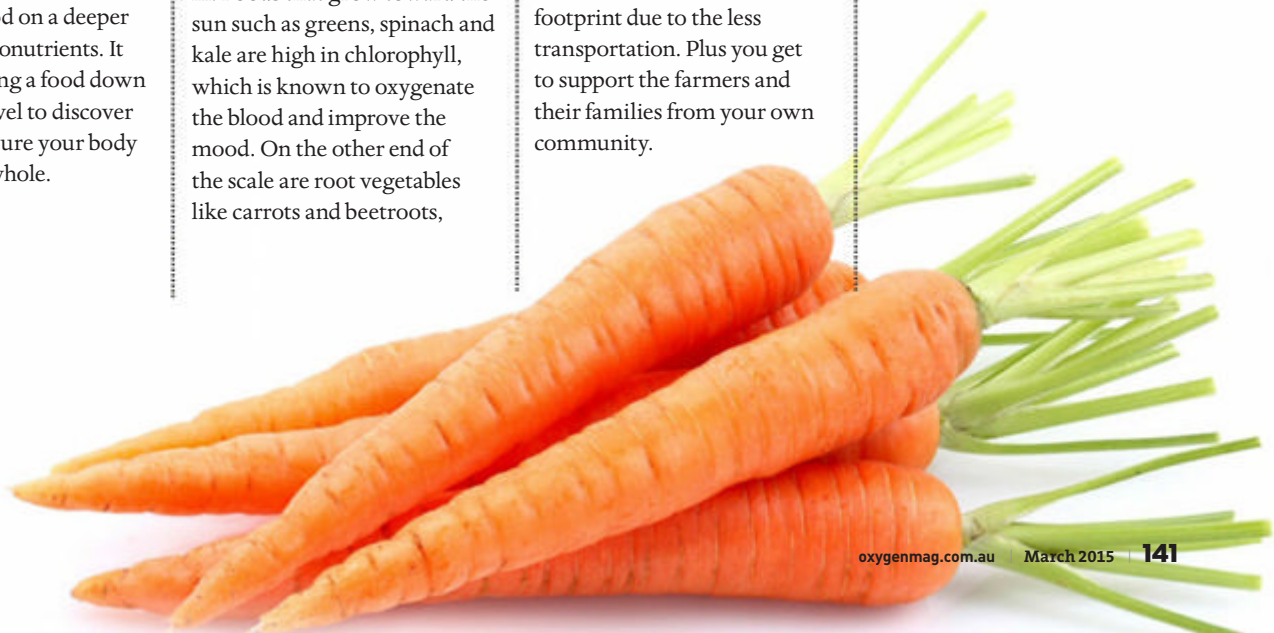
SEASONAL – Look at what is available at your local farmers' markets. Just because you can buy oranges at the supermarket doesn't mean they are in season. Often it means they have travelled thousands of kilometres on a ship. When you think about it, this will do nothing for the energetics of the food, let alone its vitamin and mineral content.

LOCAL – Strongly connected to seasonal produce, buying foods that are local to your area not only ensures freshness but also a lighter greenhouse footprint due to the less transportation. Plus you get to support the farmers and their families from your own community.

ORGANIC – This should be a no-brainer these days. Eating a whole lot of pesticides and chemicals as a side dish to your nutritious foods is not going to do you any favours, nutritionally or holistically.

WHOLE – Eating whole foods, just as nature intended, is a lot smarter for your body, the environment and your hip pocket. Processed food is not only bad for your body but also the environment. Think of those factories pumping out pollution, the toxic plastic packaging and the costs involved in this process.

Holistic nutrition is all about listening to your body and working out what will work best for you. Remember that no two people are the same. What works for one person and their lifestyle will not necessarily work for another. If you take the time to truly listen to what your body needs on all levels you will intuitively find a nutrition path that will work perfectly for you and your goals.



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RECIPE DEVELOPED BY **DANIELLE RADVAK**
PHOTOGRAPHY **MAYA VISNYEI**

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- ⅓ cup unsweetened almond milk
- ½ tbsp honey
- 10–12 fresh mint leaves
- 1 tsp lime zest
- Juice of ½ fresh lime
- 1 cup ice cubes

Blend all ingredients until smooth. Serve.

Nutrients per serving:
Calories: 150, Total Fats: 1g, Saturated Fat: 0g, Trans Fat: 0g, Cholesterol: 5mg, Sodium: 100mg, Total Carbohydrates: 11g, Dietary Fibre: 0g, Sugars: 9g, Protein: 24g, Iron: 0mg

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Which Yoga style is for you?

BY **SKYE CUSHWAY**

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WHEN I WAS 17 MY DANCE TEACHER ENCOURAGED ME TO DO YOGA. I WAS BATTLING WITH SELF-HATRED AND DEPRESSION. SHE TOLD ME I NEED TO WORK ON MY MIND. IN ALL HONESTY, I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND OR HAVE MUCH OF AN IDEA ABOUT YOGA. BUT I WENT TO MY FIRST CLASS AND I WAS HOOKED. I LOVED THE WAY IT MADE ME FEEL. AFTER A FEW YEARS OF PRACTICE I STARTED TO REALLY UNDERSTAND THE MIND-BODY CONNECTION. THEN , AFTER SEVEN YEARS OF REGULAR PRACTICE I DECIDED TO STUDY TO BECOME A YOGA TEACHER SO I COULD PASS ON MY LOVE OF YOGA.

Yoga is a moving meditation. While working on stretching and strengthening our muscles, joints, bones and tendons, we are also detoxifying our internal organs while quietening down our busy minds. Yoga is a fantastic way to connect the mind, body and spirit.

The ancient science of yoga has been practised in the east for thousands of years bringing happiness, health and peace of mind to those who study it. The benefits of yoga have been welcomed by the West and widely developed as a fitness craze. But the benefits are not just physical. With regular practice of yoga your quality of life improves on all levels: physically, emotionally, mentally and spiritually.

Yoga can help you succeed with all aspects of your life. Work, sport, study and your relationships with others can all be improved as regular yoga practice has multiple benefits for your physical and mental wellbeing. Clarity of the mind and a greater capacity for concentration will emerge. What's more, it is a fantastic active recovery class. I have NEVER had an injury over the last 10 years of lifting heavy weights. It really does help my body recover from my intense training.

The beauty of yoga is that the only piece of equipment you need is the ground you stand on. However, you might want to try a thin rubber mat. Yoga is available at most gyms and there are plenty of great yoga schools. Do your body, mind and spirit a favour and add some yoga into your workout regime today.

There are heaps of different styles and teachers. Go to a couple of different classes to find what suits you.

TURN THE PAGE FOR MORE

Ultimately, though, all styles of yoga stem from the same tree. The philosophy of yoga is that the air we breathe contains 'prana' (life force) and 'prana' is the energy that links the body with the soul. According to Eastern medicine, Prana gives us vitality to live a healthy and energy-filled life.

Here are a few of the different types of yoga:

- **ASHTANGA ISN'T FOR THE FAINT-HEARTED.** It requires a high level of physical strength. This is great if you love gymnastics and challenging yourself. It is known as eight-limbed yoga as it combines eight levels of yoga. You will definitely work up a sweat.
- **BIKRAM (HOT YOGA)** is a 90-minute class with a sequence of 26 poses and two breathing exercises all performed in a heated room of around 35 to 45 degrees Celsius. If you love dripping in sweat and really challenging the body and mind, this one is for you. Bikram is great for strengthening the back, ridding the body of toxins, improving posture as well as circulation and blood flow.
- **HATHA IS VERY GOOD FOR BEGINNERS** and if you want to stretch the body while soothing the busy mind. Fabulous for bringing inner peace to the body and mind.
- **VINYASA, ALSO KNOWN AS 'FLOW YOGA',** focuses on the breath while moving through the sequence of asana (poses). This type of yoga is great for people who like to keep moving while calming the mind.
- **IYENGAR IS MORE OF A METHODICAL YOGA.** You will work with belts, straps, blocks and other props to help you stretch even further into your practice. If you have a lot of injuries I suggest you try this first. The focus is on correct alignment.
- **KUNDALINI IS A MORE INTENSE FORM OF YOGA,** focusing on spiritual philosophy. It helps to cleanse and align our chakras (seven major energy centres) and usually involves chanting, so it can be very confronting for some, particularly in a room of strangers. Kundalini can raise a lot of different emotions and feelings, so be ready to deal with 'stuff' that needs to be brought up.

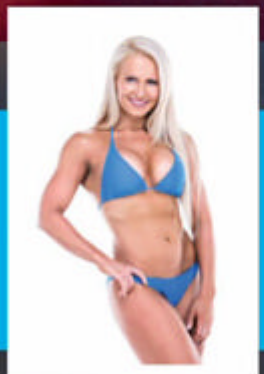
Yoga etiquette

- Arrive 10 to 15 minutes early so you don't disrupt the class.
- Don't start chatting with your friend; people are there to quieten the mind, so you should too.
- NO MOBILE PHONES! Respect the class and the teacher by switching the mobile off.
- Practice good hygiene but don't go overboard on the strong perfume. If you sweat a lot, make sure you clean up after yourself.

You will need

- A yoga mat (most studios have hire mats available for $2 to $3)
- Comfortable gym or yoga clothes
- Water and towel
- An open mind

PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



SKYE CUSHWAY

Skye Cushway is a body transformation coach, counsellor, nutritional coach and friend. She has been a personal trainer for almost 10 years and believes you must always listen to your body. Skye finds yoga helps her to find her mind-body connection and improves all aspects of your life and training.
Skye has been practising yoga for almost 20 years and has been a yoga instructor for almost nine. It is part of her daily life and if she hadn't been introduced to it as an 18-year-old going through depression and anxiety, she believes her life would be very different.

PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN

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Depressing STATISTICS

WORLDWIDE

ONE MILLION

PEOPLE TAKE **THEIR OWN LIVES**

ANNUALLY

That is more lives lost to suicide than to war and homicide combined (WHO). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS),

AUSTRALIA ALONE HAS

65,000 PEOPLE ATTEMPT SUICIDE EVERY YEAR

2,500 ARE SUCCESSFUL

If you or someone you know is showing signs of depression, whether it be withdrawing from friends and family, a sudden weight gain or weight loss, or talking about 'ending it', assistance is available. Please contact Lifeline's 24-hour helpline on 13 11 14, Kids Help Line (5-25yrs) on 1800 55 1800 or Mensline on 1300 789 978

THEY'RE CONFRONTING STATISTICS, BUT IT'S AN OCCURRENCE THAT NEEDS TO BE RECOGNISED AND CHANGED. Today, natural remedies are increasingly being looked at to assist with treating depression, including a healthy diet and exercise.

The Black Dog Institute recommends both resistance and aerobic exercise in treating depression. Regular exercise increases the level of endorphins in the brain, creating a mood 'lift'. Research also suggests that exercise may assist in increasing serotonin levels in the brain, potentially alleviating symptoms of depression by improving energy levels, libido and appetite. Exercise does not necessarily need to be intense; a walk a day can have a positive effect on individuals suffering from depression.

Central Queensland University researcher and Exercise and Sports Science Australia (ESSA) spokesperson Robert Stanton believes that determining the correct amount of exercise for treating depression is vital for the treatment to be successful.

"Understanding the appropriate exercise dosage for people with depression will provide accredited exercise physiologists with a framework that may be adopted in clinical practice to improve quality of life, possibly without the use of medication," Mr Stanton said.

"Exercise programs that comprise of moderate-intensity, supervised aerobic sessions that last for 30 to 50 minutes and are undertaken three to four times weekly over a period of at least nine weeks are likely to be most effective in the treatment of depression symptoms."

The Black Dog Institute has even found that regular exercise over a 16-week period is just as effective as antidepressant medication for those suffering from mild-to-moderate depression. Regular exercise with a friend can also help people with depression symptoms to assist with feeling less alone and taking their mind off worries and contemplation.

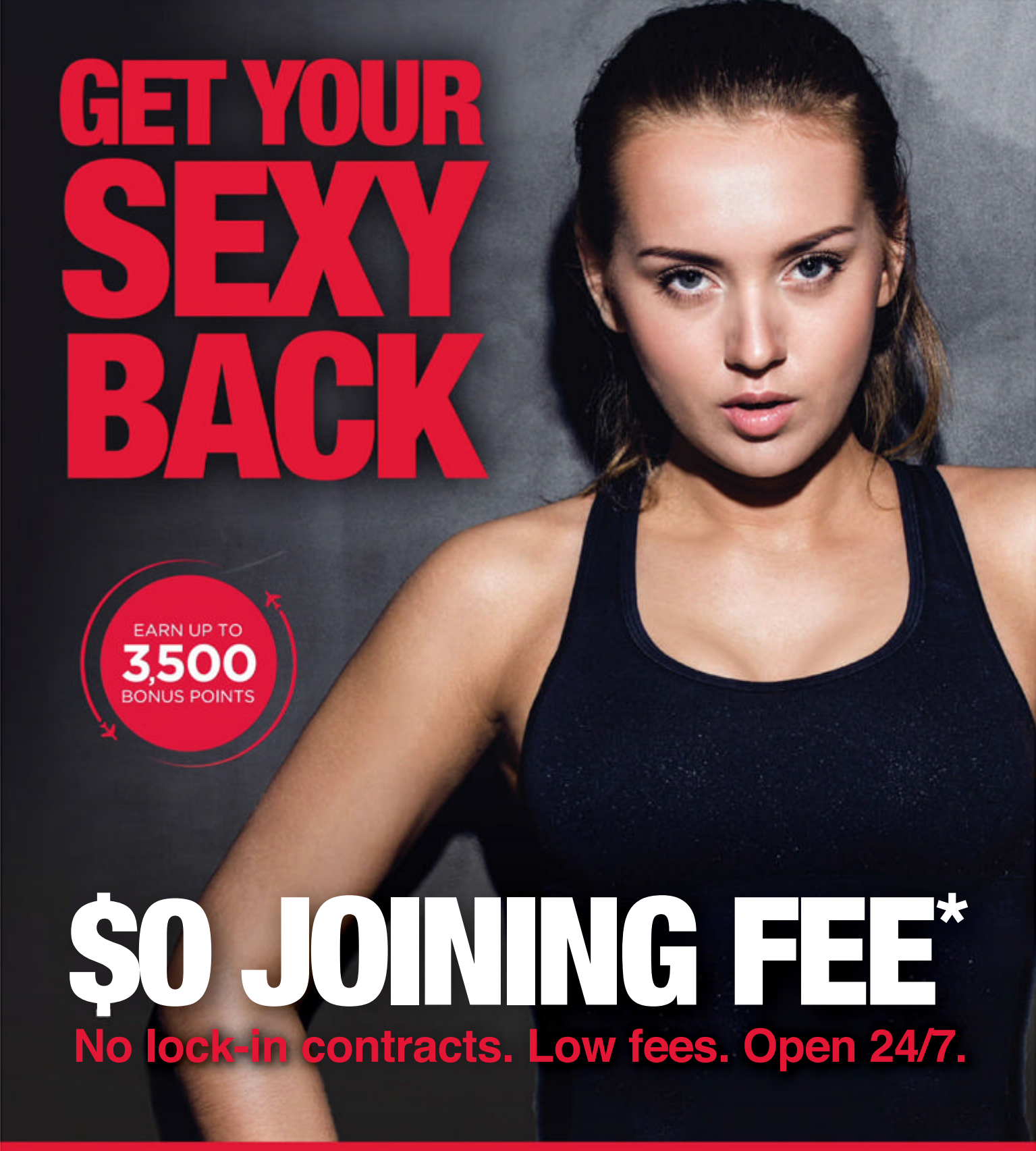
In addition to exercise, a healthy diet is also thought to play a role in decreasing depression symptoms. The Archives of General Psychiatry performed a trial that demonstrated omega-3 fatty acids had a significant influence on reducing episodes of severe depression. They state that a comparison on the consumption of omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids (PUFAs) revealed that a higher intake of PUFAs resulted in a 50-fold lower annual occurrence of major depression. Consequently, an increased intake of fish could lead to decreased symptoms of depression.

In recent years, the ABS has found that

SUICIDE HAS CLIMBED TO THE HIGHEST CAUSE OF DEATH AMONGST MEN UNDER THE AGE OF 44 AND WOMEN UNDER THE AGE OF 34 IN AUSTRALIA.

These statistics highlight the importance of discovering what is causing the rise in depression and suicide with the aim of preventing and assisting those suffering.

PHOTO CREDIT SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



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"The benefit of training individual muscle groups is that you can work areas that might need a little more attention, creating balance and symmetry in the body."

MODEL: NARMIN ASSRIA • HAIR AND MAKEUP BY NANCY JAMBAZIAN • CLOTHING BY ELISABETTA ROGIANI • SHOES: SKECHERS USA

Use this no-frills back-training workout to sculpt your flip side and look great in your backless dresses.

back ON TRACK!

Total-body training is a hot trend that strips body fat, increases endurance and saves time. But what if you want to add some muscle to your frame, bring up a lagging body part or create some slammin' curves? Gotta go old school and break it down, one muscle group at a time.

"The benefit of training individual muscle groups is that you can work areas that might need a little more attention, creating balance and symmetry in the body," explains Abbie Appel, former IFBB Fitness competitor and current international fitness presenter and speaker. With straight-set training, you can focus on creating hypertrophy in muscles that need more attention and can even specifically train areas that are weak or overstretched, such as the shoulders and midback from sitting in front of a computer, according to Appel. ▶▶

BY MICHELLE BASTA SPEERS, NSCA-CPT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT REIFF

This program is designed to help you develop a beautiful back from top to bottom. Choose one of these workouts and perform the moves in the order suggested; next week, do the second workout to keep things fresh. Devote the first set of each move to higher reps and lower weight to etch the biomechanics into your body and brain. For the next two sets, go heavy to encourage muscle breakdown, then for your last set do either drop sets or negatives to completely fatigue the muscle and cause it to fail. This strategy will constantly challenge your body and keep it guessing, encouraging progress. Do this program for four to six weeks and you'll have a fit and fabulous flip side.

Workout 1

Exercise	Sets	Reps
Barbell Deadlift	4	15, 8, 8, drop set
Wide-Grip Pulldown	4	15, 8, 8, negatives
Bent-Over Dumbbell Row	4	15, 8, 8, drop set
Seated Cable Row	4	15, 8, 8, negatives

Workout 2

Exercise	Sets	Reps
Pull-Up	4	15, 15, 15, negatives
Reverse-Grip Barbell Row	4	15, 8, 8, drop set
T-Bar Row	4	15, 8, 8, negatives
Barbell Pullover	4	15, 8, 8, drop set

Barbell Deadlift

- **Setup:** Stand behind a barbell on the floor, feet just inside shoulder width. Squat and take an overhand grip on the bar, arms just outside your legs. Lift your chest and pull your shoulders down and back.
- **Action:** Keeping your back straight, extend your legs and stand up, dragging the bar up along the fronts of your legs as you press through your heels and come to a standing position. Pause a beat and then reverse the motion, flexing your knees and hips to lower the bar just short of touching the floor.

Tip: The barbell should move in a vertical line; if it is wavering in and out, adjust your body mechanics so it moves straight up and down.

How to do ...

Drop sets: Choose a weight and do as many reps as you can. When you can't do any more, choose a lesser weight and do as many reps as you can with that one. When you can't do any more, swap out the weight once more and rep it out to failure.

Negatives: Choose a heavy weight and do a quick and powerful positive contraction. Then as slowly as you can, lower the weight back to the start position. Repeat this pattern for reps. Shoot for up to 10 seconds per negative if you can manage it.

Wide-Grip Pulldown

- **Setup:** Attach a long bar to a high cable pulley and adjust the seat so you're able to sit with your feet firmly on the floor. Take an overhand grip on the bar, hands just outside shoulder width, arms extended, and sit down. Lift your chest and contract your shoulder blades.
- **Action:** Drive your elbows down to pull the bar toward your clavicle, squeezing your shoulder blades together. Pause at the peak contraction before slowly returning to the start.

▼

Tip: Avoid leaning back and using momentum to pull the bar because it could cause injury to your shoulders and lower back.

Bent-Over Dumbbell Row

- **Setup:** Hold a dumbbell in your right hand and place your left hand and left knee on a flat bench, back flat and shoulders square. Allow your right arm to hang straight toward the floor with your head neutral.
- **Action:** Keeping your arm in close to your side, drive your elbow toward the ceiling to pull the dumbbell up to your rib cage. Squeeze your shoulder blade at the top of the motion, then lower to the start with control.

▼

Tip: Maintain the vertical movement of the dumbbell (straight up and down) while keeping your shoulders square.

Seated Cable Row

● **Setup:** Attach a V-handle to the cable pulley and hold it with your arms straight. Sit up tall with your knees slightly bent, back slightly arched and chest lifted.

● **Action:** Pull the handle in toward your abdomen by driving your elbows rearward and pulling your shoulder blades together. Keep your arms in close to your sides and your chest lifted. Pause a moment at the peak contraction, then slowly reverse the move to return to the start.

▼

Tip: Don't allow your body to be pulled forward as you lower the weight. Stay sitting tall throughout.

2

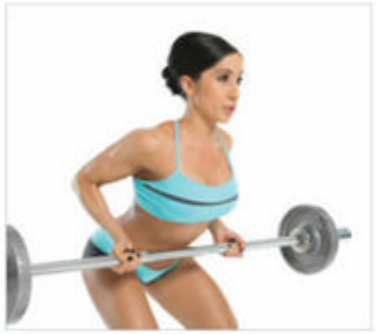
Pull-Up

● **Setup:** Take a wide overhand grip on a pull-up bar and allow your body to hang straight down. Cross your feet behind you, lift your chest and your chin, and tighten your abs.

● **Action:** Drive your elbows down and pull yourself up toward the bar, coming as high as you can and aiming to bring your chin over the bar if possible. Slowly lower to the start, coming to a full extension of your arms.

▼

Tip: If you can't yet do free-hanging pull-ups, try using a large rubber band for assistance or look for an assisted pull-up machine at your gym.



Reverse-Grip Barbell Row

- **Setup:** Take a shoulder-width, underhand grip on a barbell. Unrack the bar and stand with your feet hip-width apart. Hinge forward 45 degrees, with your back and arms straight and knees slightly bent.
- **Action:** Bend your elbows and pull the bar up toward your belly button, keeping your arms in close to your sides and squeezing your shoulder blades together at the top. Slowly lower to the start and repeat right away.

▼

Tip: Imagine pinching a pencil between your shoulder blades at the top of the move to make the most of the contraction.

T-Bar Row

- **Setup:** Secure the end of a barbell in the corner of the room. Load the opposite end and secure a V-handle underneath the bar, sliding it up so it rests against the end of the barbell. Straddle the bar with your knees bent and your back straight and grasp the V-handle with both hands. Straighten your knees until they are only slightly bent to lift the weighted end off the floor, holding it with your arms straight, back flat and torso angled about 45 degrees.
- **Action:** Drive your elbows up and back, squeezing your shoulder blades together and pulling the V-handle toward your abdomen. Pause at the peak contraction, then slowly lower to the start under control.

▼

Tip: Keep your abs and glutes engaged to stabilise your spine and pelvis as you perform your reps.

Keep the movement slow and controlled; the bar should not wobble at all.

Barbell Pullover

- **Setup:** Lie back on a flat bench with the top of your head just at the end. Have a partner hand you a light barbell and grip it overhand with your hands shoulder-width apart. Hold it straight up over your chest, arms perpendicular to the floor.
- **Action:** Keeping your arms straight, slowly lower the barbell back and over your head until your arms come next to your ears, nearly parallel to the floor. Hold the stretch for a second, then pull your arms back up smoothly in an arc to return to the start position.

▼

Tip: If you find your back is arching as you lower the weight, bring your feet up onto the bench.

Laura Danielz

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Behind the success of figure pro Felicia Romero

BY DONNA JONES

PHOTO CREDIT JAMES PATRICK

When I sat down with Felicia Romero, it became clear why she is a successful cover model. On the surface she's a beautiful woman, but dig a little deeper and there's definitely a lot of substance underneath. Felicia has graced seven fitness magazine covers, including the US *Oxygen* twice. There's no doubt the exposure has assisted her career, but she's oh so humble about it, simply explaining she was "in the right place at the right time." Reaching her level of success, though, doesn't come without hard work.

Felicia started competing as a figure competitor, earning her pro card at her first nationals. Within a week she found herself heading to a photo shoot for *Muscle and Fitness Hers*. This was the start of the juggernaut that saw her on numerous magazine covers and place in the top four on both the Olympia and Figure International stages in a career that spanned from 2004 to 2012. It wasn't, however, always the success she imagined she would achieve.

"I studied to be a lawyer and have a bachelors degree in political science," Felicia says. "I was almost finished when I realised that this was not my dream but my mother's. The hardest thing was telling her. From there I re-enrolled and completed my masters in exercise science."

Born and raised in Arizona, Felicia has started her own training business and seen it flourish.

"The mental aspect of competing has definitely helped me in other areas of my life," Felicia says.

"I always had a vision of how I wanted to look on stage; holding the trophy, winning and basically seeing where I wanted to be… I wrote an article for a magazine and I was asked what title I wanted. I said IFBB Pro, writer, motivational speaker. At that time I'd never done any speaking but I put it out there and about a month later I was contacted to speak at a school assembly of about a thousand kids. All of a sudden I was a motivational speaker."

Since then Felicia has spoken to dozens of schools in the Phoenix area with many more to come. At the moment her life is a busy mix of fitness trainer, youth ambassador, cover model, commentator, promoter and business owner. How does she fit it all in, you ask?

"It's all about prioritising," Felicia says. "I went through a stage where I wasn't training – I didn't want to even pick up a weight. I was so busy I was neglecting my own health. I was telling my clients one thing and doing the complete opposite…"

Felicia admits that, like so many of us, she struggled with her self-image, and following years of abuse to her body as a competitor, she had to rectify the damage she had done. She even confesses that at one stage in her career, if she was told to eat dirt to get lean, she would have – learning to love and respect herself and be happy with healthy instead of 'perfect' was a must. Today, she works out and eats to become stronger, healthier and happier.

"I lift about three to four times per week doing circuits, intervals, Olympic lifts and sometimes heavy," Felicia says. "I train in such a way that my cardio is incorporated; I rarely do cardio on a machine for the sake of cardio. I do yoga on Sundays. I train now to be healthy and because it makes me feel good not to look a certain way. I still pack my food and eat clean most of the time. If I want a cookie, I'll have it, but now I don't feel compelled to eat the whole packet... I think I've managed to achieve balance in my life."

IS THERE ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU WOULD GIVE TO GIRLS CONSIDERING GETTING ON STAGE TO COMPETE?

"The mental discipline of the sport has helped me enormously, but it's such a subjective sport where everyone is beautiful. One person's idea of perfection may not be another's. Take the positives but learn to be accepting of who you are and don't take the criticism to heart."

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO BE IN FIVE YEARS?

"I want to be successful. I do see myself with a husband and a couple of kids but I'm not consumed by it. Maybe I'll be the Latino Jillian Michaels."

YOU CAN FOLLOW FELICIA ON:

Twitter: @feliciaromero
Facebook: Felicia Romero IFBB Figure Pro
Instagram: FeliciaRomero

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Are You Next?

What is your favourite quote?

Sarah McKay
"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams and live the life you've imagined."

Alice Slark
"Make it happen, shock every single one of them."

Karren Van Loenen
"Without struggle there can be no progress."

Anna Dziopa
"It never gets easier, you just get stronger."

Brenda Austin
"Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." - *Albert Einstein*

Pheobe Armfield
"Don't do it until you get it right, do it until you can't get it wrong."

Anna Dziopa

GOLD COAST, QLD
AGE: **30**
WEIGHT: **55KG**
HEIGHT: **163CM**
DAY JOB: **CORPORATE TRAVEL MANAGER**

ROLE MODEL? Bella Falconi and Paige Hathaway. I admire their strong physiques and the way they live a healthy and active life all year round, not just for a show.

FAVOURITE CHEAT FOOD? I previously followed a meal plan that was quite restrictive where I had one cheat meal a week. I am now a bit more flexible with my diet and do not restrict myself. If I feel like a bit of chocolate, I will have it, but will try to keep the rest of my meals healthy that day. My favourite cheat meal is an acai bowl. Not exactly the worst thing to eat but it's high in sugar.

WORKOUT PLAN? I currently weight train five times a week and split these days into muscle groups. I train legs and glutes two times a week as this is my weakest area. On the other two days I will just go for a walk or do some light exercise.

FAVOURITE CARDIO? Walks on the beach. Walking in the sand can be tough but I am lucky to live on the Gold Coast where the natural scenery is so beautiful it is easy to enjoy.

Sarah McKay

LAUNCESTON, TAS
AGE: **23**
WEIGHT: **60KG**
HEIGHT: **168CM**
DAY JOB: **PERSONAL TRAINER**

ROLE MODEL? One person I look up to is Sally Pearson. She is an incredible athlete and I know she works her arse off for her achievements so I have a lot of respect for her. But my dad is without a doubt one of my biggest role models. He is the most modest, hard-working person I have ever known, and ever since I was tiny all I wanted was to be like him.

FAVOURITE CHEAT FOOD? My boyfriend and I found the most awesome place for Indian curry and that is my fave by far! We eat there once a week – if we feel like we have earned it.

WORKOUT PLAN? My workout plan changes every four to six weeks because my body responds best to a varied program, but it usually consists of a six-day split, training a different muscle group every day. Depending on where I am in my comp prep, I'll usually add some LISS (low-intensity steady state) cardio. I also work in a gym, so I take four to six classes a week as well!

YOUR BEST FITNESS TIP? Firstly, whatever you do, it has to be sustainable. So whether it's your nutrition or training, do something that can stay in your life. Secondly, you are YOU. Not someone else, so don't aim to have what she has. Aim to better yourself.

BIGGEST SUPPORT? My boyfriend Sam. I am so lucky to have someone who is just as hardcore into fitness as I am. We pick each other up on our bad days – he's amazing.

Karren Van Loenen

BRISBANE, QLD
AGE: **25**
WEIGHT: **54KG**
HEIGHT: **164CM**
DAY JOB: **PERSONAL TRAINER**

CARDIO OR WEIGHTS? Weights! I love the feeling after a session and how it's improved my physique. Although cardio will always have a special place, so long as it's sprints or boxing.

HOW DO YOU RELAX? I love family time, chilling out at Mum and Dad's place with everyone there is my favourite thing to do by far.

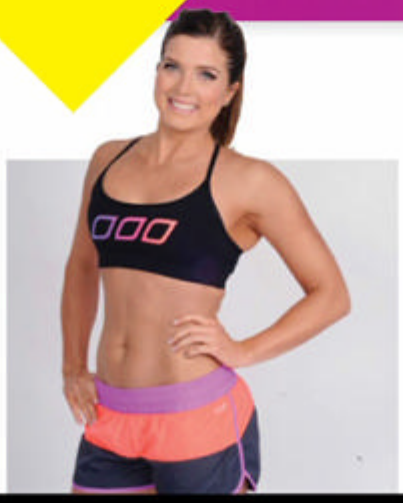
NEWBIE ADVICE? Get a professional to take you through a program. If it's not something they offer at your gym, try a few PT sessions first and take note. Otherwise, just start slow, warm up, perform a leg exercise, two pull exercises (back) and one push exercise (chest) and STRETCH.

FAVOURITE FEATURE? I love my shoulders. They have taken the most amount of work to build and I am proud of the little buggers.

FAVOURITE MOVE? Deadlifts. I have always said, if there were one exercise I would do for the rest of my life it would be deadlifts. It's highly functional and activates the most muscles.

WORKOUT PLAN? I change it fairly regularly, but generally it's:
Mon: Chest and tris
Tues: Legs
Wed: Cardio (boxing/sprints)
Thur: Shoulders and abs
Fri: Rest or cardio
Sat: Rest
Sun: Back and bis

ANNA PHOTO: ASH MASON | SARAH MCKAY PHOTO BY CHRIS YOUNG | KAREN PHOTO BY SHAE STYLES PHOTOGRAPHY



Phoebe **Armfield**

GOLD COAST, QLD
AGE: **32**
WEIGHT: **60KG**
HEIGHT: **165CM**
DAY JOB: **PHYSIOTHERAPIST**

FAVOURITE TRAINING MOVE? Chin-ups because it's functional and if I have to be honest it impresses people when I whip out 12, and I can usually find a bar anywhere. The other would be deadlifts. Again, it's functional and I love going heavy.

WORKOUT PLAN? I train one to two times a day, six days a week:
Mon: AM – weights (legs), PM – aerial and pole training
Tues: AM – walk/bike ride/run, PM – pole training
Wed: AM – weights (back and triceps), PM – Yoga
Thur: AM – walk/bike ride/run
Fri: AM – weights (chest and biceps)
Saturday: AM – pole and yoga
Sunday: Rest

TRAINING ALONE OR WITH A BUDDY? I love training with a buddy because we push each other, and it's fun and social.

HOW DO YOU FIND BALANCE? This takes constant tweaking. I am lucky as my husband and I love training, so we do this together for our quality couple time.

FAVOURITE PHYSICAL FEATURE? My arms (thank you pole dancing!). Being an ex-ballet dancer, I used to have very thing arms. Now I love seeing the definition in my arms.

FUTURE PLANS? I would absolutely love to have my own column or blog responding to physiotherapy questions from the public.

Brenda **Austin**

ADELAIDE, SA
AGE: **67**
WEIGHT: **54KG**
HEIGHT: **157CM**
DAY JOB: **FOSTER CARER**

CARDIO OR WEIGHTS? Weights. My goal has always to be strong and gain muscle definition. Working out with weights, the right way, will transform your body.

FAVOURITE CHEAT FOOD? I rarely have cheats, but there is an amazing little café on the Moana beachfront that have the most delicious Thai chicken curry!

WORKOUT PLAN? I work out five days a week. I choose one major muscle per workout for heavy weight resistant exercises, and then incorporate a light cardio workout afterward. Each time I try to increase my weights.

BEST FITNESS TIP? Set realistic goals, be consistent with an effective exercise routine, change it every two weeks to simply enjoy variety, and lift weights.

FAVOURITE PHYSICAL FEATURE? Arms. I think they're well defined now. Twelve months ago I had 'bat' wings and as an older person my skin used to hang in folds.

NEWBIE ADVICE? Learn the correct techniques. The more you educate yourself, the more successful you will become. Engage a personal trainer if you can or ask the trainers in the gym who are always happy to help.

Alice **Slark**

MACKAY, QLD
AGE: **27**
WEIGHT: **64KG**
HEIGHT: **167CM**
DAY JOB: **TOWN PLANNER**

FAVOURITE BOOK? Eat, Pray, Love by Elizabeth Gilbert. It's inspiring and awakened something inside of me, with one of my favourite quotes being: "Embrace the glorious mess that you are. . ."

CARDIO OR WEIGHTS? I appreciate that cardio has its place, but I'm a weights gal these days – give me a squat rack any day! For a healthy balance of both cardio and weights training, you will often find me at my local CrossFit centre.

FAVOURITE NON-CHEAT FOOD? I really enjoy a homemade hommus with celery – I may sometimes substitute the hommus for natural peanut butter!

FAVOURITE TRAINING MOVE? Back squats are my favourite. You get such a feeling of accomplishment when you up your PB weight on a squat.

WORKOUT PLAN?
Mon: AM – PT (legs), PM – swim/run
Tues: AM – walk, PM – boxing
Wed: AM – PT (HIIT/plyo), PM – CrossFit
Thur: AM – PT (arms/back), PM – swim/run
Fri: AM – walk, PM – CrossFit
Sat: AM – group fitness class, PM – beach runs
Sun – REST

TRAINING ALONE OR WITH A BUDDY? With a buddy – it makes me work harder and I've got some excellent fitness sistas who push me beyond my comfort zone.

PHOEBE PHOTO: JENELLE STAFFORD | BRENDA PHOTO BY KAYLA TEMPLE | ALICES PHOTO BY PHOTOS BY NELL

Exhale

"Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly."

PHOTO CREDIT: DALLAS OLSEN | MODEL: ANDREA RYFF

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